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REMAKING EASTERN EUROPE



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Consequences of Japan's rise as world banker

By David Moberg

When Tokyo's stock market crashed in late February, fingers of blame pointed in several directions: rising Japanese interest rates, an overvalued stock market, internal government policy disputes and even the U.S.-introduced computerized program trading. Although there is some truth in each explanation, the crash also may be seen as an outgrowth of the difficulties stemming from Japan's new role as banker to the world.

In the '80s, as Japan ran up huge trade surpluses with the U.S., there were at least two divergent U.S. responses. Some financial capitalists and their political allies essentially said not to worry—let others do the dirty work of making things while the U.S. acts as the world's financial center. Meanwhile, those concerned about unemployment and other economic repercussions of the trade deficit focused on fears that Japan was simply exploiting the U.S.

The first view turned out to be dead wrong. With the upward revaluation of the yen after 1985, Japanese businesses adapted smoothly and continued to run large manufacturing trade surpluses with the U.S. At the same time, the wealth of Japanese businesses essentially doubled overnight. To minimize domestic inflation, the Japanese Ministry of Finance urged corporations and financial institutions to reverse their historic domestic investment mission and send the surplus overseas. Hence Japanese firms could not only buy up foreign properties and invest heavily in new overseas manufacturing but they also could finance ever-larger shares of the U.S. government deficit.

Financial boom: Now nine of the 10 largest banks in the world are Japanese, and Japanese banks account for 40 percent of international bank assets—two times the figure for 1983. Their share of the U.S. commercial banking market is large and growing.

Japan has also made big inroads in trading financial assets. In 1987 the stock-market value of Japanese companies surpassed that of U.S. companies for the first time, and the difference has continued to grow rapidly. Japan's top four securities firms are the largest in the world—the biggest, Nomura, is 20 times the size of Merrill Lynch. These securities firms have become major global bond

underwriters. Japan opened its first markets in exotic financial futures in 1988, and just last week Nomura announced it was plunging heavily into program trading previously dominated by U.S. firms.

"The rise of Japanese financial power and the contradictions of U.S. economic policy are weakening the competitive position of the U.S. financial-services industry," David Hale, first vice president and chief economist of Kemper Financial Services, wrote in the January-February *Harvard Business Review*. "As a consequence, the U.S. may soon face the same market erosion in financial services that has afflicted its producers of machine tools, automobiles and semiconductors."

As a result of this new wealth and financial power, Japan has quietly begun to displace the U.S. as the central regulating power of international capitalism. Contrary to the one-sided—although partly accurate—view of Japan as an self-centered global power dumping its products overseas (see story on page 3), Japan's Ministry of Finance has often urged Japanese investors to hold dollar investments even when it was costly to them. The ministry realized that Japan had more to gain from a stable world economic order and a U.S. market capable of consuming its products.

Last July Hale warned that the 1987-88 expansionary policies of Japan's Ministry of Finance to stabilize the dollar and promote global economic growth could trigger inflation, raise interest rates and destabilize the Tokyo stock market. Although inflation has remained comparatively low at around 2.6 percent, it still has risen, prompting the Bank of Japan to raise interest rates three times in the past year, partly to stabilize a weakening yen.

Destabilization: Japan's stock crash had little immediate worldwide effect, but it may dampen somewhat the willingness of Japanese investors to play their stabilizing role and buy U.S. government bonds. Earlier this year there were fears among U.S. bond dealers that Japan's buyers would not be buying their usual 30 percent or more of U.S. long-term bonds. Several times since 1986 "Japanese authorities tried to keep investors in dollars by telling them how much good the U.S. had done for Japan after the war, and how important it was for Japan to stay with the dollar to prevent the total collapse of the world financial system," Richard Koo of the Nomura Research Institute told Congress in 1988. If Japanese authorities find that task more difficult, the U.S. will suffer higher interest rates and greater likelihood of recession.

Indeed the Bank of Japan, fearing inflation, has openly clashed recently with the Ministry of Finance, which downplays such a prospect and emphasizes instead the necessity of Japan sustaining global financial stability. On February 22 Vice Minister of Finance Makoto Utsumi told an international conference that the "asset inflation" of stock and land prices was different from price inflation and that the emerging "ambiguity" over government policy could destabilize the markets. "The stability of the Japanese markets themselves is the foundation not only for the maintenance of a stable and strong domestic demand in Japan but also for the stability of the world economy," he said, arguing that providing such stability should be a prime Japanese policy objective.

Ironically, Hale notes, pressure from the U.S. government to "liberalize"—open up and deregulate—Japanese financial markets have completely backfired. The view is shared by financial writer Daniel Burstein, author of *Yen! Japan's New Financial Empire and Its Threat to America*. U.S. banks and financial firms, he claims, have actually lost ground in Japan while Japanese institutions have gained global influence. And, he notes, the weakening of intimate links between banks, corporations, securities firms and the Ministry of Finance—which is to global money what Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry was to Japan's triumph in global manufacturing—makes it more difficult for Japan to play the stabilizing role.

The development of a global money market in Tokyo, Hale warns, may also speed the replacement of the dollar by the yen as the primary reserve currency and medium of international trade and debt—further weakening the U.S. politically and economically. The more the U.S. pushes "free trade" in financial services, the faster such change will occur.

The last resort: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

economist Charles P. Kindleberger claims that when capitalist markets enter their recurring crises, they require a "lender of last resort" to stem the panic. The Great Depression of the '30s, he argues, was worsened because Britain had lost the capacity to play such a global-banker role after World War I and the U.S. was unwilling to assume the responsibility.

After World War II, the U.S. assumed that role but gradually lost financial power when it became obsessed with being a global cop—with an anti-communist, neo-colonial agenda.

Japan's actions as lender of last resort to the U.S. may have eased implementation of former President Ronald Reagan's policies in the '80s and stabilized the international economy, but they also permitted the U.S. to be, as Hale put it, "spender of last resort." Japan also specifically wanted to spare the U.S. from economic pressures to cut

INSIDE STORY

military spending. So the debt binge of the '80s left U.S. manufacturing far undercapitalized compared to Japan. It also left public needs—from education to infrastructure—underfinanced, thus undercutting future U.S. economic growth.

Japan's role as banker to the U.S. will give it increasing political clout, much as the U.S. has for decades used its financial clout to bully or reward other nations. But Japan's success, Hale argues, also points to limitations of the unguided free market.

"Future historians will probably note with more than ironic delight," Hale wrote in a paper last July, "that at the end of the '80s it was graduates of the University of Tokyo Law School presiding over the Finance Ministry of the industrial world's least deregulated economy who helped to rescue the Reagan administration and the international economic system from currency misalignments, trade imbalance and financial crises produced by the fiscal and monetary policies of [Milton Friedman-style free market] economic graduates of the University of Chicago."

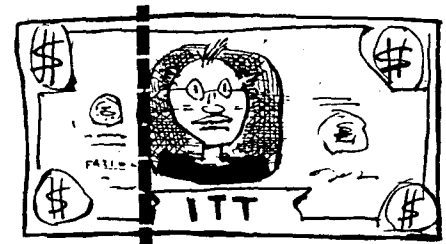
Yet reliance on those far-sighted Japanese bureaucrats will also cost the U.S. dearly in years to come. What the U.S. should have done in the '80s—and can still do with greater difficulty—is to recognize that markets work best not when left to their anarchic whims but when they are supported, guided, restrained and stabilized by public policy that can see beyond short-range greed. □

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Dumping, by which products of one country are introduced into the commerce of another country at less than the normal value of the products, is to be condemned if it causes or threatens material injury to an established industry in the territory of a contracting party or materially retards the establishment of a domestic industry.

—General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, Article VI

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

AMERICAN MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS and banks have allied themselves with foreign governments in an effort which, if successful, will threaten thousands of American jobs.

The multinationals, organized through the Washington-based Emergency Committee for American Trade (ECAT), have joined the governments of Japan and South Korea in trying to gut U.S. trade laws that prevent imports from being sold below cost in U.S. markets—a practice called “dumping.”

Unable to convince Congress and the White House to throw out anti-dumping protections, the multinationals are backing the foreign governments’ attempt to rewrite the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the treaty that since 1947 has governed trade among the major capitalist countries. In negotiations taking place in Geneva, ECAT and the foreign governments are seeking to amend GATT’s Article VI, which allows countries to retaliate when imports sold below cost imperil domestic industries.

Destroying competition: Countries and companies dump goods in foreign markets for two different reasons. First, they use dumping to get rid of goods that can’t be sold at cost because of worldwide overcapacity. Second, they use dumping to drive their competitors out of business—sacrificing short-term profit in order to win market share. In both cases, dumping can destroy the industries of the importing country.

In the ’70s, for instance, when more steel was being produced worldwide than could be sold profitably, foreign companies looked to the U.S. market—the only national market that did not restrict imports—to get rid of their excess capacity. The U.S. steel industry would have been destroyed if the government had not used the threat of anti-dumping action to get importers to agree to import restrictions. Thanks to the restrictions, the U.S. steel industry has since revived.

Japan, in particular, has used dumping as a strategy for winning market share. In the ’60s and ’70s, Japan’s dumping devastated the U.S. television industry; in the mid-’80s, Japanese semiconductor producers drove six out of eight American firms out of the chip business. In 1986 the U.S. found Japanese firms guilty of dumping chips and imposed a floor on chip prices. As a result, the two remaining U.S. chip firms survived and a third, Motorola, has resumed chip production.

Japan and, to a lesser extent, South Korea have a special stake in weakening the anti-dumping laws—in 1988, for instance, Japan accounted for 75 percent of the trade covered by anti-dumping orders. Japan and South Korea also have no stake in strengthening the laws for their own use. Both countries have sufficient formal and



U.S. firms help ‘dump’ trade protections

informal trade barriers to keep out any dumped goods.

U.S. multinationals and banks believe they, too, have an interest in weakening the anti-dumping laws. IBM and other companies in ECAT are themselves major importers into the U.S. In all, about 15 to 20 percent of American imports come from U.S. multinationals based overseas. Anti-dumping laws could be used against their products as well.

But more important, ECAT’s multinationals rely on imports for components and sometimes for the actual products they sell; they want to pay the lowest price possible. For instance, computer firms like Unisys and Hewlett-Packard buy their chips and other components from Japan; Unisys even markets Japanese-made computers. Other firms would like to be able to buy “dumped” materials. Tractor builder Caterpillar, a leader of the ECAT effort, wants to be able to buy steel at the lowest possible prices.

Whose public interest? Neither ECAT nor the foreign governments are calling for outright elimination of the anti-dumping laws. Instead they are making proposals to discourage their use. Some of the proposals follow.

- Governments should consider “consumer interests” and the “public interest” when assessing whether to charge a company or group of companies with dumping. (Such a ploy would allow foreign companies and their multinational allies to transform each dumping case into a political battle between rival constituencies.)

- Protesting companies should have to obtain “substantial” or “majority” support among companies in their industries before bringing a complaint. (This could allow, for instance, the American subsidiaries of foreign firms to block dumping complaints from American-owned domestic firms.)

- In determining whether goods are being dumped, GATT should draw up special circumstances that would justify pricing below

cost, including recession and the high costs associated with a new product. (This loophole would allow dumping to eliminate excess capacity and to win market share.)

Japan in particular has used dumping as a strategy for winning market share. In the ’60s and ’70s Japan’s dumping devastated the U.S. television industry.

- Dumping should be permitted when there is a scarcity of the product. (This is a condition that can easily be manipulated by foreign producers, as has become evident in the case of chip shortages.)

- The scope of complaints should be limited drastically, so that, for instance, a finding that Japan must stop dumping 64K computer chips would not apply to the next generation of 256K chips. (With products that have a short life cycle, this would make dumping cases meaningless.)

ECAT is directing its lobbying efforts at the White House, which earlier this year proposed strengthening rather than weakening the GATT agreements. The group’s efforts are being countered by the Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA), the American Electronics Association and a group called the Labor-Industry Coalition for International Trade, which includes Motorola, TRW Inc., the Industrial Union Dept. of the AFL-CIO and the United Steelworkers of America.

Those opposing the multinationals’ lobbying efforts fear that the White House could be swayed. “We’re concerned that people signed off on the current proposal for tactical

reasons and that in the crunch it might be given away,” one lawyer working for the SIA commented. “There are a number of people in the administration who would be happy to bargain away our trade laws.”

The current GATT negotiations, which are called the Uruguay Round, are expected to be completed by December. The revised treaty will then be brought to the U.S. Senate, where it will be voted up or down without amendment. This will make it difficult to reject particular modifications, including those proposed by ECAT, Japan and South Korea.

The best hope for defeating ECAT’s efforts is to publicize them widely. If most Americans knew what was going on, few would support this attempt by multinationals to put domestic producers at a disadvantage. But to date ECAT and its foreign allies have been able to hide behind the sheer technicality of the issues.

ECAT’s record on trade

The Emergency Committee for American Trade (ECAT) was founded in 1967 by a group of banks and corporations concerned about labor-movement support for import quotas. Its principal focus has been lobbying against regulation of multinationals.

In 1971, it fought the AFL-CIO-backed Burke-Hartke bill that would have prevented multinationals from crediting foreign tax payments on their U.S. income tax. In 1987, ECAT lobbied against a bill by Rep. John Bryant (D-TX) that would have forced foreign investors to disclose their holdings.

ECAT presently has 53 members, representing the largest U.S. banks and multinationals. These include Bristol-Myers, General Motors, Citibank, Exxon, Mobil Oil and IBM.

—J.B.J.

By Joel Bleifuss

The long arm of the CIA

In the past year millions of U.S. taxpayer dollars have poured into Central America to help Nicaragua hold free elections. Last week *Newsweek's* Bob Parry and Douglas Waller reported that the CIA spent \$6 million outside of Nicaragua to try to swing the election toward the National Opposition Union (UNO). *In These Times* has since learned some details of that covert operation. Larry Birns of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs told *In These Times* that he has it from "an extremely good source" that sometime shortly before October 1989 a presidential finding was signed that gave the CIA a five-month appropriation of \$6 million for "regional program support." According to Birns' source, the money was used to train UNO activists in San Jose, Costa Rica. It was also spent to help finance Radio Impacto, a San Jose station which has a long history of CIA connections. The station, ideally suited for reaching the population of southern Nicaragua, heavily slanted its news reports in an anti-Sandinista direction. Another part of that \$6 million was used to pay Western European journalists of an anti-Sandinista bent to come to Nicaragua to cover the election. One of the rumored fruits of this CIA project was an article published in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* by the Bonn bureau chief well known for his anti-Sandinista stance. He reported that President Daniel Ortega, his brother, Defense Minister Humberto Ortega and Interior Minister Tomas Borge were stashing away millions of dollars in European banks. He based his reports on Western intelligence sources, i.e., the CIA. The story was widely quoted in Nicaragua prior to the election, and in the U.S. the *Washington Times* picked it up. Although par for the course, this CIA interference is particularly significant because it was a clear violation of an agreement former President Jimmy Carter had reached with President Ortega early last fall. That agreement allowed \$9 million from the National Endowment for Democracy to enter Nicaragua on the condition that the U.S. not finance a covert operation to influence the election. This was not the only agreement broken in the Bush administration's successful bid to undermine Nicaraguan democracy.

The Republican International, I

The administration was active on other fronts, like a White House fundraising effort on behalf of Nicaragua's president-elect Violeta Barrios de Chamorro. Never mind that such efforts appear to have violated Congress' intent that U.S. financial involvement in the Nicaraguan election be limited to non-partisan activities. *Newsday's* Peter Eisner and Knut Royce report that in mid-January, State Department Counsel Abraham Sofaer sent a legal memorandum to the White House acknowledging that although no federal statute explicitly prohibits the president or members of his administration from raising money for Chamorro, "any such solicitation by the president or other White House official ... does raise legal concerns." In an allusion to Iran-contra, Sofaer wrote that Congress has "repeatedly questioned the legality or propriety of efforts to solicit private funds to accomplish objectives which Congress itself has either prohibited or refused to support." He said that Congress, when it approved money last year for the Nicaraguan election, "limited its authorization ... to assistance that supports the election process rather than particular candidates. The limitation does not apply to privately solicited funds, but raising such funds involves government officials in pursuing as U.S. policy an objective Congress did not adopt, and which it may have deemed undesirable."

A White House visit: Administration fundraising efforts got their start on Nov. 8, 1989, when Chamorro and her campaign manager, Antonio Lacayo, visited the White House. At the time, White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater said that Chamorro and Bush had discussed, among other things, "international assistance to the electoral process." What Fitzwater did not reveal was that campaign manager Lacayo met privately with White House Chief of Staff John Sununu. A White House aide told *Newsday* that during this meeting Sununu pledged to Lacayo that the White House "would do all that we could do to meet any special requests for the [UNO] campaign." That assurance prompted Lacayo to write Sununu last December 12, thanking him for being "kind enough to talk with me separately about our campaign. ... I honestly appreciate your suggestions." He then told Sununu that UNO's ability to raise money from Republican contributors would be helped "if the White House expressed interest in the matter." A



Postcard issued by McDonald's boycotters. The back urges the food giant to raise inner-city wages.

McBoycott against unfair wages

PHILADELPHIA—Stop by the golden arches in Philly and you'll find the usual McNuggets and Quarter-pounders. But you'll also find picketers protesting McDonald's policy of paying its inner-city workers an average of \$1 an hour less than workers in the surrounding suburbs.

"They're treating one group of people better than another group of people," said Rev. Melvin Carter Jr. of the Friendly Friends Baptist Church, one of the boycott organizers, "and that's not right."

With cries of "the McCott is on!" the Campaign for Fair Wages, a coalition of community organizers and church and labor leaders launched a boycott earlier this month of Philadelphia's 45 McDonald's restaurants. The group is determined to win a raise for the city's fast-food workers.

The pay discrepancy issue cropped up last November when the Philadelphia Unemployment Project (PUP) surveyed area fast-food restaurants and discovered that

workers in the city made an average of \$3.82 an hour, while their suburban counterparts made about \$4.82.

"We can cripple McDonald's in Philadelphia," Carter said. "We have our congregations, and they can make things happen." He pointed to past successes with boycotts to change hiring practices at Tastykake, Bond's Bread and Coca-Cola. Most recently black community leaders stopped R.J. Reynolds Tobacco from test-marketing a new cigarette targeting black smokers. "I'm certain we can bring McDonald's to its knees," Carter said.

"People say, 'They're just burger-flippers,'" said John Dodds, the director of PUP. "But that's an attitude that needs to be changed. If someone is sweating out a day's pay, they should be paid."

The PUP survey shows a majority of Philadelphia's fast-food workers are adults. It also shows that 77 percent of inner-city workers are minorities, while 67 percent of suburban workers are white. Dodds points out that North Philadelphia, a predominantly black neighbor-

hood in the poorest part of town, has the most consistently low wages in the area.

"It's not purely an anti-McDonald's move," Dodds said of the boycott. "We want to show people where the economy is headed. Unemployment is not the issue. Now it is low wages."

Boycott leaders have had no luck negotiating with McDonald's. "They cried poverty. You'd think they were on food stamps," said Rev. M. Lorenzo Shepard, pastor of Mount Olivet Tabernacle Baptist Church about a recent meeting. "They want to put their money in public relations and advertising instead of giving people who deserve it a little bit more. But I guess that's the way the corporate mentality works."

Dodds sees the boycott as a tactical shift from organizing fast-food workers, a way of showing that supply and demand can work both ways. "If we're going to buy the burgers, we want to see the wages go up," he said. "I can't believe for a second that Philadelphia is the only city exploiting its fast-food workers."

—Paul Choitz

Thatcher's poll tax revolts British citizens

LONDON—Conservative politicians and financial markets in the United Kingdom are in a state of near-panic as widespread protests against a new British tax instituted by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher grow more violent. The demonstrations, the most serious of which resulted in 30 injuries and extensive looting in the north London borough of Hackney, have raised hopes and fears that the 11-year-old Thatcher government could fall from power.

Opposition to the tax has sparked demonstrations in virtually every corner of Britain. In Bristol, police used clubs on demonstrators when they tried to storm the government council building, while protesters in Birmingham and Norwich forced

their way into meetings held to set local tax rates. Violent protests have also erupted in Bradford, Exeter, Plymouth and other smaller towns throughout the country.

The fury is centered on the new local taxation system, commonly known as the poll tax. Described by many as the most unjust revenue system ever instituted in Britain, the poll tax replaces the former property tax with a flat levy determined by local governments on everyone over the age of 18, regardless of income. This means that a wealthy London lawyer will pay the same poll tax as a London cleaning woman. It also means that a family with two adult children at home in the northern city of York, who might have paid \$400 a year on their modest home under the old system, will now have to pay \$264 per person with the poll tax—a total annual bill of \$1,056.

Where one lives also plays a major

role in how much one pays. For example, Britain's *Guardian* newspaper reports that a family of three in London's Wandsworth District will pay £444 a year, while the same family across the road in Lambeth District will have to pay £1,950.

The anger erupted in early March as local councils began setting the per-head rates. Trying to keep basic, locally financed necessities—garbage collection, schools, etc.—afloat while minimizing the damaging increases that most people will be obliged to pay, the councils have found themselves in a no-win situation. A BBC survey found that the councils, even while trimming some services to the bone, will probably increase the average household tax bill by about 35 percent in the coming year.

Why was such an unpopular tax system passed by Thatcher in the first place? The reason is pure politics. The Conservative government

has long argued that opposition Labour-run councils, with their more extensive public services and higher rates, should be held responsible for their greater spending. Thatcher's plan is to place such a large tax burden on residents in Labour-run councils that they will oust council members in the next elections and replace them with "financially responsible" Conservatives.

For Thatcher, the eventual results of the poll tax seemed clear. In an address to the House of Commons, she declared, "The lesson will be learned that it is the Labour authorities which are the high spenders and it is the Conservative ones which look after their constituents."

To the government's great embarrassment, though, taxpayers are getting hit the hardest in the Conservative strongholds of southern England, where most of the poll tax protests have taken place. Forced to set rates at more than \$400 per person—much higher than previous government estimates—Conservative council members have in some cases charged more than the Labour-controlled inner-city coun-

cils that are Thatcher's primary targets. To make matters worse, the Labour Party issued a list of 50 Conservative-controlled councils that have exceeded government tax estimates—a list that includes the home councils of Thatcher and other leading Conservative politicians.

Thatcher's goal to encourage outraged voters to kick out high-spending Labour councils seems to have backfired. The anger of demonstrators is clearly aimed at the prime minister and not the local councils, which are quick to point out that it was Thatcher who dreamed up the poll tax.

So far the government's response to the demonstrations has been to blame the whole thing on radical leftists—or Militant—members of the Labour Party. While some Militant supporters have reportedly been involved in a few of the demonstrations, the widespread nature of the protests, as well as the fact that both Conservatives and Labour supporters are involved in the demonstrations, rules out any radical leftist conspiracy theories. Even the queen, a pillar of British conservatism, has

joined the protests by announcing that she will pay her servants' poll taxes.

The question now is: will the protests go beyond demonstrations and into non-payment? If Scotland is a bellwether, the Thatcher government may have a serious problem. Implemented as a test case in Scotland one year ago, the poll tax remains highly unpopular, with a large number of people refusing to pay. Non-payment is reportedly widespread in some parts of Glasgow, while some 700,000 Scots have fallen at least three months behind on their payments.

But Scotland may be more an exception than the rule for the simple reason that the Scots can't be thrown into jail for non-payment. For angry residents of England and Wales, the alternative to jail terms is the ballot box—and with a recent *Daily Telegraph* Gallup poll showing Labour with an 18.5 percent lead over the Conservatives, it seems possible that Thatcher's grand plan to break the opposition may instead lead to her downfall.

—Daniel Pruzin

The Jewish peace movement's new kid on the block

Until last May, the conservative American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) billed itself as the only organization registered with Congress to lobby on U.S.-Israeli relations.

Now there's a new kid on the block.

The Jewish Peace Lobby (JPL), with about 2,000 members around the country, hopes to help guide U.S. policy toward encouraging direct talks between the now-unsettled Israeli government and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the eventual formation of a Palestinian state.

JPL President Jerome Segal says his group backs U.S. efforts to host talks between Egypt and Israel in Washington, as well as other efforts to bring the Israelis and Palestinians together at some point in Cairo. But, he continues, the JPL has a "much broader vision of U.S. policy."

The U.S., Segal says, should create "an environment in which it is likely that the negotiations are not just started but are successful." Specifically, he says, he wants the U.S. to encourage further PLO moderation, earmark 1 percent of its economic aid to Israel for grass-roots efforts to bring Israelis and Palestinians together and strongly oppose the violation of civil rights in the Occupied Territories while remaining sensitive to Israeli security concerns.

The JPL is the youngest of several new Jewish organizations on the left. In 1988, the leftist Jewish magazine *Tikkun* sponsored a forum in New York to mark the emergence of a new movement among Jewish progressives. Conference speakers told the audience that progressive Jews

had both allowed the conservative Jewish establishment to speak in their name and not challenged anti-Semitism on the left.

Although the JPL is less than one year old, the group has already started making a name for itself. It was the only Jewish organization involved in promoting congressional legislation that encouraged Israel to reopen West Bank schools. And when Israeli leader Yitzhak Shamir came to the U.S. last November, the JPL presented him with an open letter signed by more than 200 U.S. rabbis supporting the exchange of land for peace.

Segal, a scholar and former adviser to the Agency for International Development (AID), runs the Washington, D.C.-based JPL on a small budget. He calls the group the "McDonald's of the peace movement—we take on a few tasks in order to do them well." And he's received wide support from many well-known personalities, including backing from Grace Paley, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Gloria Steinem, Nathan Glazer, Adrienne Rich and Stanley Hoffman.

The organization has not, however, received an endorsement from the much larger and more powerful AIPAC. AIPAC spokeswoman Toby Dershowitz declined to comment when asked about the JPL, although it appears that AIPAC is watching the JPL's growth. AIPAC, Segal says, is keeping a "fairly fine-grained track on what we're doing" and adds that he's heard that the group has taken note of which rabbis have endorsed the JPL.

The attitude of the Jewish establishment can be gleaned from a press release on the JPL issued by B'nai B'rith International, which bills itself the "world's largest Jewish organization." B'nai B'rith Executive Vice President Thomas Neumann

says in the release that Segal "began his involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict not as an advocate of Israel but of an independent PLO state. Given the goals of this fledgling organization, no one should be deluded into thinking that the new Peace Lobby is a voice of any significance in the Jewish community."

Although the JPL and the Jewish establishment differ on some major issues, Segal says he doesn't want the group to define itself as "anti-AIPAC." And the two groups agree on several issues, such as preventing the sale of sophisticated U.S. weapons to countries at war with Israel.

The two groups also don't want to see the U.S. use aid to Israel as a lever to get Israel to the negotiating table—but for very different reasons. The JPL view is that such efforts would likely push Israeli politics and policy to the right.

Working toward a secure Mideast peace may seem quixotic given the level of violence in the *intifada* and the political stalemate within Israel. But Segal believes that unexpected change can occur. Segal was one of the first American Jews to open a dialogue with the PLO, and he met with PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat for the first time in June 1987. In 1988, he urged Palestinians to unilaterally declare their independence and wage a campaign for peace. At the same time, Segal played a role in getting the PLO to renounce terrorism.

Now Segal and the JPL are turning their attention toward fostering the conditions necessary for a political settlement. To this end, the JPL is developing a piece of model legislation called the "Israeli-Palestinian Peace Environment Act of 1990." One supposes that this will be the Big Mac on JPL's lobbying menu this year.

—Mark Feinberg

senior administration official told *Newsday* that the White House then asked Bernard Aronson, assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, to sign a letter endorsing UNO's fundraising efforts. The State Department, however, refused the request. So on January 13 National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft had Sununu sign a letter that said private contributions to UNO were legal and would provide "greatly needed support" for its campaign. And on January 15, the White House dispatched the president's son Jeb, a board member of a Miami-based group that raised money for UNO, and William Pryce, a special assistant to the president for Latin American Affairs, to Houston for a private meeting with Chamorro. A White House official told *Newsday* that the three discussed campaign strategy and finances.

Give that UNO may live: Around the time of this Houston meeting, Scowcroft received attorney Sofaer's warning that White House fundraising for Chamorro "does raise legal concerns." On January 23, Scowcroft wrote and inaccurately advised the president that the State Department believed that this fundraising raised "policy rather than legal concern[s]." He also said that the State Department "cautions about possible adverse congressional reaction." In an apparent effort to defuse any such reaction, Scowcroft then recommended that Bush write and invite both the Republican and Democratic parties to contribute to UNO, which Bush did the next day. Democratic Chairman Ron Brown refused the request, but Republican Chairman Lee Atwater sent UNO \$25,000 in party funds.

Teflon legacy: Bush's contra-funding scheme, more subtle than the Iran-contra conspiracy, appears to have come off without a hitch. Once again a Republican administration turned to private money to promote a policy that a Democratic Congress had refused to fund. Don't expect to read all about it. These days nobody is as kind or as gentle as the national media when it comes to the political indiscretions of a president who's riding high in the polls.

The Republican International, II

UNO was not the only rightist political party in Central America that Washington Republicans were greasing wheels for. On February 4, Rafael Calderon Fournier was elected president of Costa Rica, rolling to victory with the help of hundreds of thousands of U.S. taxpayer dollars. Calderon, the godson of former Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza, was a vocal opponent of former Costa Rican President Oscar Arias and his Central American peace plan. Calderon, a contra backer, has said that he would like to militarize his country by creating a "police force" trained by U.S. military advisers. The money to support his candidacy originated in the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a "private" organization founded in 1983 "to support democratic traditions, strengthen new democracies, open closed societies and sustain democratic possibilities in countries in crisis"—none of which apply to Costa Rica. The NED is funded by Congress through the U.S. Information Agency. Last year NED received \$15.8 million. It doles out money for democracy through a network of "core grantee" organizations. One of those is the National Republican Institute for International Affairs, which from 1986 to 1989 provided \$434,000 to the Association for the Defense of Costa Rican Liberty and Democracy, a front group of Calderon's right-wing Social Christian Unity Party. In an excellent report Vicki Kemper of *Common Cause Magazine* relates that Republican Institute President Keith Schuette told her: "The association was created to receive the grant; it was not a pre-existing institution." The Republican Institute in effect managed the Association for the Defense of Costa Rican Liberty with the help of Calderon, who, having lost the 1986 election to Oscar Arias, was named the association's executive director. For his labors the Republican Institute paid Calderon \$20,000 in 1986 and \$29,500 in 1987. He resigned from the association in 1988 to run again for president. Republican Institute funding made it possible for the association to hire and train 200 political organizers and to fund the creation of an anti-leftist labor union. Republican Institute money also helped support the Association for the Defense of Costa Rican Liberty and Democracy's publication, *The Forge of Social Christian Thought*. In the magazine's September 1986 inaugural issue Calderon called Arias's peace plan "a deformation of masculine values" that was "impugning the national virility" of Costa Rica.

Next week: More on the National Republican Institute for International Affairs.

By Salim Muwakkil

More are going back to the future with Farrakhan

LISTEN TO A RAP RECORD THESE DAYS AND you're likely to be startled by a stern sermon from Nation of Islam (NOI) leader Louis Farrakhan. Rap music's recombinant aesthetic encourages the use of "found" sounds, and the controversial leader's soaring rhetoric has become a staple sample in the rap-music subculture. Indeed, many African-American youths received their first exposure to the Black Muslim message on the dance floor.

A traditional message: Those who condemn the NOI leader as a racist demagogue worry that his appeal to disenchanted youth could eventually foment racial turmoil. For most of the NOI's tumultuous 58-year history, in fact, that view served as conventional wisdom in the black community. But an increasing number of African-Americans are beginning to question that wisdom. Farrakhan's message may be tinged with a strident black nationalism, they allow, but it differs little from religion's traditional message.

His fiery oratory urges self-discipline, family reverence, ethnic solidarity, hard work, honesty, civility and all the other virtues held dear by Judeo-Christian culture. Unlike other religious leaders, however, Farrakhan is a hit with the young. For those African-Americans who bemoan black youth's growing estrangement from the values of their religious heritage but seemingly are powerless to stop it, this is a welcome development. Maybe Farrakhan's unlikely youth appeal will allow him to succeed where the black church has failed, they reason.

What's more, that reasoning is beginning to strike some responsive chords in mainstream America. Both the *Washington Post* and the *Washington Times* accorded Farrakhan treatment befitting a visiting head of state during respective luncheon interviews with editorial board members and key editors at both publications. The edited transcripts were prominently featured, and the NOI leader's words were presented without the cut-and-paste distortions that have typified much of his media coverage.

Later, the *Post*-owned *Newsweek* magazine carried a story expressing grudging recognition of his value to a black community in crisis. "Farrakhan's underlying message is hard to ignore," it concluded. But his "tendency toward apocalyptic ranting makes it all too easy for white Americans to ignore the power of his message to the economically distressed, drug-ravaged neighborhoods of the inner city." The article detailed how the NOI has succeeded in eliminating drug dealing and drug violence from a Washington, D.C., housing project and the group's support among community groups "desperate for some solutions."

Such generous assessments of his message would have been unimaginable only two years ago. Yet despite his recent openings to the media, Farrakhan's program hasn't changed. What has changed is a widespread acknowledgement that a growing segment of the African-American community is in the midst of a precipitous decline. "Farrakhan is saying that drugs and the war on drugs are destroying the very fabric of black America," *Newsweek* noted, "and he may be right."

His new media thrust is also an attempt to capitalize on the sense of exasperation at



Many blacks don't believe the hype—they say Louis Farrakhan has gotten a bad rap.

large in the land. The incremental racial progress provoked by the civil-rights movement is reversing itself, and there's little hope that things will improve anytime soon.

BLACK AMERICA

Moreover, many white Americans appear increasingly disenchanted with the concerns of their fellow black citizens, impatient with what they consider African-Americans' slow assimilation process.

Tragic statistics: Compounding the damage caused by the government's retreat from racial justice are the contemporary assaults of crack, crack-related crime and AIDS that are accelerating the decay of communities already reeling from a host of social dislocations easily traced to slavery's legacy.

All of this may mean little to most white Americans and, accordingly, the mainstream media has tended to downplay them. But to many black Americans, it shouts a story of impending doom and raises serious questions about the very survival of many black communities. The word "genocide" is being heard in the most unlikely places these days. The situation obviously requires desperate measures and, in such an atmosphere, even some of Farrakhan's prescriptions sound reasonable.

"White people want us to hate Minister Farrakhan, but all he's trying to do is get us to love ourselves," said Demetria Clark, a senior at Hampton Institute, a traditionally black college in Virginia. Like thousands of other black collegians who turn out in huge numbers to hear the NOI leader speak, Clark is attracted to his message of self-affirmation. And she, like many others, is bewildered by Jewish groups' fierce denunciations of him.

"I've heard Farrakhan many times, and I never heard him focus on Jews except in a positive way. I just couldn't understand why they started harassing him and calling him anti-Semitic," she said. "In fact, he used to urge black people to follow the example of the Jewish people by sticking together for group benefits."

Jews and the NOI: When the late Elijah Muhammad, NOI patriarch and Farrakhan's mentor, spoke of Jews, it was often favorably and in the context of a biblical parallel comparing America's treatment of its black population to ancient Babylon's treatment of Jews or to the Israelites' 400 years of captivity in Pharaoh's Egypt. He made few specific references to contemporary Jews other than to condemn them as "devils"—which he said of all whites. His racist doctrine was not partial to ethnic distinctions and, until Jesse Jackson's 1984 campaign, neither was Farrakhan's.

When the violence-prone Jewish Defense League threatened to harm Jackson—whom it had disliked since publication of the photograph showing him hugging Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat—Farrakhan offered to provide security during the early days of Jackson's campaign. The Secret Service had denied Jackson its protection, so Farrakhan's offer was right on time. Tensions increased following a speech in which Farrakhan warned Jews in particular to lay off Jackson.

Next came a speech in which the NOI leader called Adolph Hitler a "wickedly great" man. Subsequent media reports dropped the word "wickedly" however. The notion that a black leader could venerate a racist as notorious as Hitler was ridiculous on its face, but somehow it stuck. It was also ironic. Farrakhan often used the story of the Nazis' rise as a

cautionary tale to blacks about the hazards of integrating with whites: just as Jews were lulled into thinking they were Germans, blacks are being lulled into thinking they're Americans.

Later, his widely reported "Judaism is a dirty religion" quote contextually referred to Zionists' use of religion to justify their theft of Palestinian land. Once again, Farrakhan was misquoted and misconstrued in the media. The NOI leader simply was not prepared for the intense media scrutiny occasioned by his links to presidential candidate Jackson.

But he also tapped into the deep anti-Jewish prejudices that do exist in certain quarters of the black activist community. This, combined with a kind of circle-the-wagons sentiment provoked by the attacks from Jewish groups, enhanced his standing as an uncompromising advocate of black rights, and he skillfully exploited that new eminence.

By 1985, his popularity had soared. He attracted nearly 35,000 people to New York's Madison Square Garden that October. By then his notoriety had forced a break with Jackson. It had always been an awkward relationship; the leader of a multiracial "rainbow coalition" and the country's leading advocate of black supremacy would seem to have little in common.

Yakub's creation: Farrakhan has followed Elijah Muhammad's teachings religiously. Black activists who treasure Farrakhan's charisma and intelligence but gag on his belief system have long hoped he would reject the more outrageous aspects of NOI doctrine—e.g., white people were grafted out of black people by a "big-headed scientist" named Yakub and created specifically to bedevil the planet, unidentified flying objects are actually manned satellites of a mothership that will rescue only righteous black people from the upcoming apocalypse, black people will need no weapons in the inevitable race war because God will attack white people with natural disasters like earthquakes and tornadoes—in a bid for wider acceptance.

And therein is Farrakhan's dilemma: his legitimacy as NOI leader is based on his strict adherence to Elijah Muhammad's fundamental doctrine, yet that adherence has cost Farrakhan some of the international acclaim he seeks. The orthodox Islamic world rejects as heresies many aspects of the Black Muslim message. The chief heresies are the NOI beliefs that Elijah is the "last messenger" (and not Muhammad ibn-Abdullah, Islam's founder), that God can be manifested as a man and that spiritual character is genetically determined.

During Farrakhan's 13-year stint as NOI leader, he has inched it toward orthodox practices. No longer do NOI members disparage some well-grounded Islamic practices as mere rituals of Arabic culture. For example, the group now observes the Ramadan fast during the period officially authorized by Islamic authorities instead of during the month of December, as it did under Elijah's leadership.

Although the NOI message is as conservative and as anti-sensual as that of the most rigid Christian fundamentalist sect, it nonetheless attracts the interests of the most licentious segment of the African-American community—young men. How is the NOI able to transform irresponsible drug addicts into functioning members of society while other programs fail? What lessons can be learned

Continued on page 10

By Katharine Greider

CHICAGO

ON A SATURDAY MORNING IN JANUARY, A small band of demonstrators gathers on the muddy, tire-marked lawn of Harold Ickes Homes, a public-housing high rise on this city's South Side. About 20 young black Ickes tenants hand out fluorescent orange stickers that read "FIGHT THE POWER! SEIZE THE POWER!" The protesters are joined by a small group of white activists. Someone points a megaphone toward the faces peering down from the building's windows and yells, "Stop the lockdown!"

In this case, "lockdown"—prison lingo for confinement—refers to Operation Clean Sweep, a Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) program designed to rid the city's projects of gangs and drug dealers. Under the program, launched by CHA Chairman Vincent Lane in September 1988, 19 "emergency inspections" have been conducted in CHA public housing throughout the city.

During these inspections, commonly known as "sweeps," Chicago police surround

PUBLIC HOUSING

a building while CHA personnel search each apartment and evict any adult whose name is not on the lease. Mesh fences are erected around the building, vacant apartments are locked, and all building entrances but one are sealed. After a sweep is completed, all residents over seven years old must show a CHA-issued identification card upon entering the building and any guests must sign in and out.

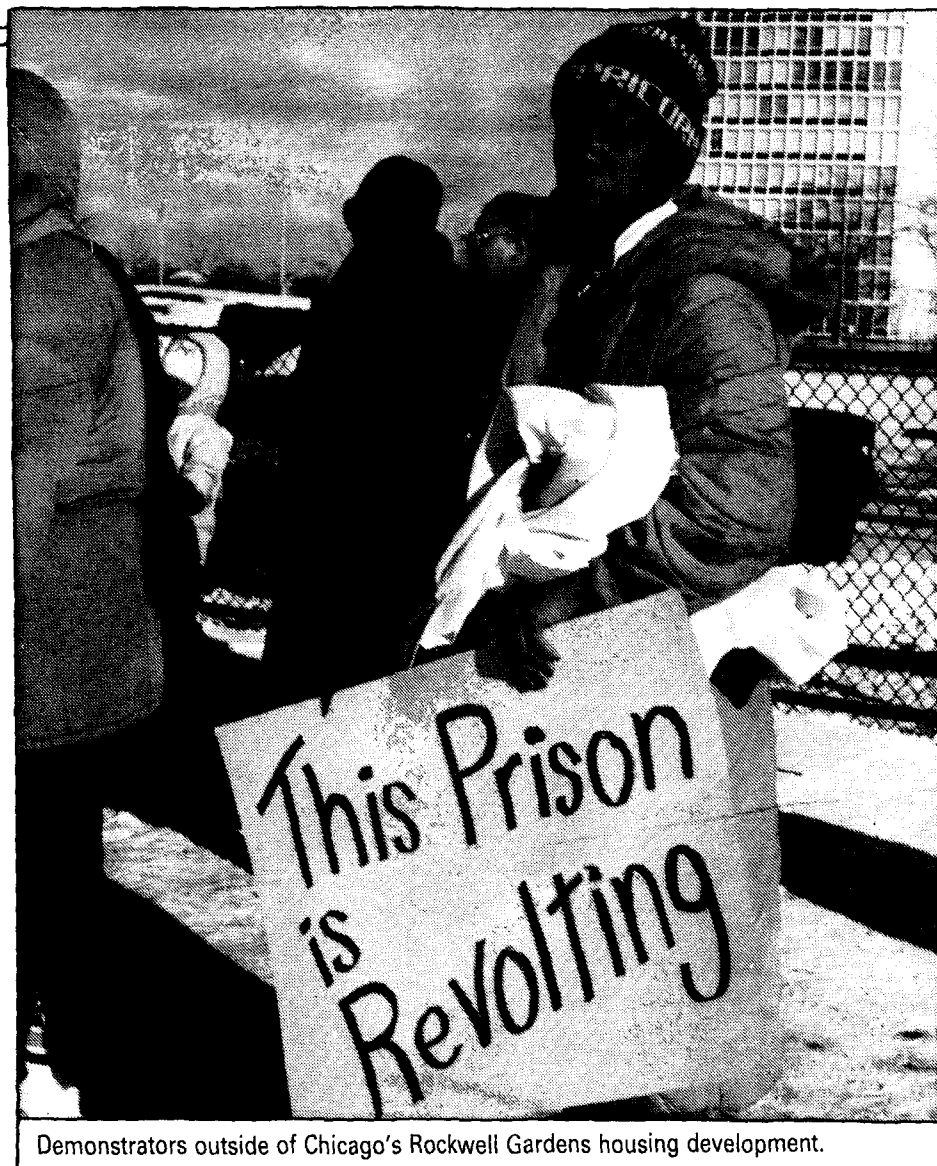
With these aggressive measures, Chicago's housing projects have become a testing ground for strategies that cut a wide swath in the name of the nation's war on drugs.

A model program? Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Jack Kemp is one of Operation Clean Sweep's most enthusiastic supporters and has advised housing administrations across the country to follow its lead. The press and the public have applauded the sweeps as a bold offensive in the war on drugs, and many CHA residents who have long fought for increased security have welcomed the program.

But the demonstrators at the Ickes Homes argue that Operation Clean Sweep, far from a "surgical strike" at gangs and drugs, targets all housing-project residents and, as the saying goes, allows God to sort them out. The small group of tenants who have banded together as "Fight the Power" say the CHA's struggle to control crime conceals a drive—however unarticulated—to rein in poor blacks. "The city needs a bone to bite on," says Fight the Power member Maurice Richmond, "and we're always the bone."

After its most recent sweep of the South Side's Washington Park project in January, the CHA's Lane vowed to press on with the program. Under pressure from Chicago citizens and HUD to address crime in CHA high rises, Lane launched Operation Clean Sweep only a few months after he took office. In 1987, HUD threatened to take Chicago's public housing over from the CHA's notoriously poor management. But in 1989, pleased by the success of the sweeps, HUD increased the CHA's annual capital-improvement budget by about \$17 million.

Part of the additional funds received for 1989 went to training a new CHA police force of up to 200 officers, the first class of which will graduate this month. The new force will strengthen the already heavy presence of



Demonstrators outside of Chicago's Rockwell Gardens housing development.

Sweeping up crime and civil rights

guards and police at CHA developments. Unlike CHA security guards, the new officers will be able to make arrests.

In the program's early days, tenant complaints provoked the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to file a class-action suit on behalf of CHA residents alleging civil liberties violations. Visitors initially were barred from swept buildings between midnight and 9 a.m. "If my family wants to come—I don't care if it's one o'clock or two o'clock—they should be able to come," says a 13-year resident of Ickes. "Drugs is just a coverup," she concludes. "They're trying to put us back in prison."

The ACLU suit also cited illegal searches conducted by Chicago police officers during the housing sweeps. The CHA is authorized to inspect apartments only if an immediate threat to the safety of residents or CHA personnel is said to exist. This authority does not include the right to search for contraband.

A settlement agreement between the ACLU and the CHA was approved by a federal court last November. Although the agreement abolishes the rigid restrictions on guests, visitors must still sign in and out and may stay with a tenant for no longer than two weeks. The agreement also bars police from participating in the apartment inspections unless illegal substances or activities are involved.

Also opposed to the program has been a small but diverse assortment of groups from outside the projects, including the Catholic group Eighth Day Center for Justice, the Campaign to End the CHA Lockdown—formed after the CHA's second sweep—and the Revolutionary Communist Party.

Though no one disputes the CHA's legal right to force "unauthorized" residents to move out of the developments, members of Fight the Power, along with outside activists,

have challenged this move on moral and practical grounds. In a city with 40,000 homeless, getting a CHA apartment can take months, even years. While some 7,600 apartments stand empty, tens of thousands of families are already on the CHA waiting list.

Who are these unauthorized inhabitants? CHA spokesperson Lu Wallace says that while gang members "have a way of disappearing" just before the sweeps, it is they who are ultimately denied access to CHA buildings. "These are not down-on-their-luck citizens," says Wallace.

Some residents and activists disagree, claiming that the thousands evicted by the CHA are "project-hoppers," friends and relatives who live with legal tenants because they have no place else to go. "It's outrageous for them [the CHA] to say they're all gangbangers and drug dealers," says Neil Dunaetz of the Campaign to End the CHA Lockdown.

A second city: The combined population of CHA developments—150,000—would constitute the second-largest city in Illinois. The CHA system is in many ways a separate community, home to generations of Chicago's poor. Families in CHA housing earn an average of around \$5,000 a year. The overwhelming burden of this poverty falls on black children, who comprise almost three-quarters of the resident population. Many of their mothers are single and receive welfare. The vast majority of those living in the projects are the victims—not the perpetrators—of crime.

Many of these residents favor the new "security systems." Before last year's sweeps at the Rockwell Gardens development on Chicago's West side, Patricia Fultz, a slight, softspoken woman, left her apartment only when absolutely necessary. Now, although she says she has noticed a recent increase in shootings, she feels safe venturing out with her children.

Safety is paramount to Fultz—months before her building was swept, she was dragged from an elevator in her building and raped in a darkened hallway. Fultz says she believes this would not have happened if the new security measures had been in place. Lights now burn in the stairwells and corridors of her building, CHA guards patrol each floor every hour and all entrances are sealed or guarded. "It's perfect," said one new tenant.

Tenant response to Operation Clean Sweep appears to depend to some extent on how the sweeps and the security installations are carried out. Some residents—most of them young girls—complain of constant sexual harassment by the guards hired to protect them. One 18-year-old woman claims the guards at Rockwell would "cuss you out" upon entering the building. She moved shortly after her building was swept and is prepared to do so again. Another 14-year-old girl from Prairie Courts says some security guards "act as if we're so poor we don't know anything—[as if] we don't know our rights, we don't read the Constitution."

Police records show that in eight out of nine swept buildings at Rockwell, there has been a marked decrease in crime. But CHA personnel acknowledge that in some cases the gangs simply move on to other buildings.

Hear no evil, see no evil: The CHA's Wallace calls the fight-the-lockdown activists "a very small but vociferous group." But it's difficult to gauge how many tenants refrain from protesting the new CHA policy out of fear of recrimination. "The CHA can use the rhetoric that residents are predominantly in favor of Operation Clean Sweep," says Bob Bossie of the Eighth Day Center for Justice, "but the opportunity to speak is squelched."

After the demonstrations, the activists return to their homes outside the projects while CHA residents endure the daily rigors of life in the projects, as well as the consequences of challenging the sweeps. Several anti-lockdown residents have expressed fear of being placed on "supervision" by their project manager, and members of the Campaign to End the CHA Lockdown claim tenants are continually threatened with eviction if they join the protest.

One resident told a group of activists, "Y'all just out here raising a lot of trouble. These people are going to get evicted, and if they run our asses out of here, you're not going to want us to stay in your neighborhood."

The participation of predominantly white groups in a movement aimed at empowering poor African-Americans is indeed problematic. A nurse who has lived in Ickes for over two decades told a Revolutionary Communist Party worker, "It's hard for me to try to work with the party because I have to live here. I don't know who's going to come and do what to me." In response, the white activist advised her to remember the courage of Rosa Parks. Activist Jean Hughes has a different approach. "I'm not into telling the black community who they are," she says. "But I am at their disposal."

Those fighting the lockdowns face an uphill battle. If opposition to Operation Clean Sweep is to gain steam, the momentum will have to come from CHA residents. At the January demonstration, one resident and member of Fight the Power sank to his knees, appealing to his neighbors for support. "I can't do it alone," he said, "I need you to help me." □

By Nancy Watzman

SAN MATEO, CA

PAT SOCIA HAS A DREAM FOR AMERICA'S youth: she sees a day when they realize they are capable of controlling their animal urges and choosing chastity until they are ready for happy, heterosexual marriages.

Of course, she acknowledges, teens may need some convincing—say, through slogans like “Pet your dog, not your date,” “Sex is like driving—you need a license for both” and “The safest birth control is self-control.” If you tell them there's a possibility—no one knows for sure, she says—that they can catch AIDS by “deep kissing,” they might choose to avoid the “dangers” of dating. Talking up the failure rate of contraceptives helps too, she adds, as does suggesting that teenage girls take the so-called chastity pledge, which goes, “I choose chastity.”

“I'll do the right thing,
And wait for the ring.”

Socia travels around the country presenting seminars for teachers and parents on “Sex Respect,” an “abstinence-based” sex-education curriculum designed to reduce teen pregnancy by teaching young people that sex before marriage is bad for their health. Conservative groups have championed Sex Respect as an alternative to the sex-education programs that include information about abortion and how to use the various methods of contraception.

A mixed message: “There are programs that claim to teach abstinence but really teach a mixed message,” Socia says as she outlines the difference between the “two types of sex education,” which she calls “non-directive” and “directive.” The “non-directive” programs—such as those sponsored by Planned Parenthood—emphasize that “knowledge is the key” and require “moral neutrality” about teenage behavior. “Directive” programs like Sex Respect, however, are based on the premise that “knowledge alone is not enough—clear directions must be given to help youth know not only how to decide but what to decide, she says. “There's no such thing as a neutral position. Not to say ‘no’ is to say it's OK.”

Socia recently appeared at the Villa Hotel

Sex Respect tells teens to ‘pet dogs, not dates’

in San Mateo, Calif., to deliver a one-day Sex Respect seminar to about 30 teachers, parents and other interested parties. Sex Respect is probably the most infamous offspring of the 1981 federal Adolescent Family Life Act, dubbed the “chastity bill” by family-

SEX

planning activists.

Distributed under the program title Project Respect by an Illinois-based organization, the Committee on the Status of Women, which also holds a five-year federal grant to evaluate the program's effectiveness, Sex Respect is popping up in skirmishes over sex education across the country. The most recent flareups occurred in Washington state and Utah, where debate erupted over proposals to use the curriculum in the schools.

Since its publication in 1986, the Sex Respect curriculum has enabled groups that once would have been expected to oppose sex education—Catholic and fundamentalist groups and anti-abortion activists—to jump into a public debate about teen pregnancy-prevention initiatives. Socia is one of four Sex Respect trainers employed by the Committee on the Status of Women. Committee Executive Director Kathleen Sullivan estimates that Project Respect gives from 60 to 70 seminars a year.

Sexual healing: Socia sprinkles her presentations with anecdotes from her own experience, saying, “The first year of our marriage, my husband thought I was an icebox and I thought he was a sex maniac.” She also quotes liberally from *USA Today*, *Redbook*, *Reader's Digest* and “Dear Abby” and makes plenty of references to the controversial nature of the program.

“This is where some of us will part water,” she says before launching into a discussion about the dangers of the birth-control pill. “This makes our critics foam at the mouth,”

she quips after explaining the concept of “secondary virginity,” which enables teenagers who have had sex to declare themselves virgins again and refrain from sex until marriage. “You can never be a physical virgin again, of course,” she says. “But you can mentally, spiritually, be a virgin again.”

The Sex Respect text refers to abortion as killing a baby by asking, “Does [a pregnant teenager] get an abortion to kill her baby? ...Is it fair to make the baby pay for a bad decision she and her partner made? ...In the long run [the couple] will feel guilt, depression and anxiety.”

Socia also solicits audience participation. To demonstrate the danger of using condoms, she gives balloons—meant to represent condoms—to several men and asks them to blow them up. When one of the men huffs and puffs but can't blow up his balloon,

Sex Respect trainer Pat Socia sprinkles her presentations with anecdotes from her own experience, saying, “The first year of our marriage, my husband thought I was an icebox and I thought he was a sex maniac.”

Socia admits she pricked it with a pin.

One California school district and one high school—Glendale Unified School District and Wasco Union High School—already use Sex Respect. And the recent seminar in San Mateo and another the same week in Santa Maria were doubtlessly meant to drum up more interest. It seems that California is ripe for a new curriculum.

Not too much more, too much more: In 1988, the California legislature overwhelmingly approved an addition to the state education code requiring that all sex-education programs emphasize that abstinence from sexual intercourse is the “only protection that is 100 percent effective” against teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS “when transmitted sexually.” The law also requires that course material includes discussion of “the possible emotional and psychological consequences of pre-adolescent and adolescent sexual intercourse outside of marriage,” as well as instruction on the “failure and success rates of contraceptives.”

The California law, which took effect last July, is part of a national trend toward emphasizing abstinence over other forms of contraception. A study published last March by the Alan Guttmacher Institute shows that while 40 states have laws or guidelines supporting the teaching of abstinence, just 32 states and the District of Columbia report that they require or encourage instruction about other forms of pregnancy prevention.

The Sex Respect curriculum is divided into 10 chapters with titles including “Free Sex:

Is It or Isn't It?” and “Sex on Credit: Play Now, Pay Later.” It also features illustrations, comics, suggested activities and discussion points. Much of the program is devoted to encouraging self-esteem—one chapter, titled “Staying Cool—It's Never Too Late” gives teens six tips on building self-confidence. Another chapter says that “saying ‘no’ to teenage sex can be a special part of your individuality, and it can boost your self-esteem.... We are more able to keep our respect for others when we aren't using them or being used by them.”

Respect and reality: “For a certain segment of the population, [Sex Respect] probably does work,” says David Alois, associate executive director of the Planned Parenthood public-affairs office in Sacramento. “Mostly I'm talking about Christian schools and private schools. But I think it's a very unrealistic approach to the world and does a real disservice to the kids. The reality is that they're out there and they're having sex.”

Nancy Abby, a trainer with Education Training Research Associates (ETR) in Santa Cruz, also says that there are elements of Sex Respect that are good. “One of the best concepts—and I laugh when I say it—is secondary virginity,” she says. “It's an important concept, because many kids, especially if they have been brought up to believe that it's wrong to have sex, feel that they have really lost something. It's an important thing for young men to hear that it's OK for a woman to say, ‘Maybe we did have sex the other night, but I don't want that anymore.’” Abby criticizes the curriculum, however, for being “absolutely homophobic” and for “putting people down” who may be having sex.

Just how effective is Sex Respect? That depends, of course, on who you talk to. Sullivan points to survey data that shows that teenagers' attitudes toward premarital sex changed significantly after they completed Sex Respect. “If one little 10-session course can make a real difference,” she says, “it does show that reinforcement of abstinence works.” According to Sullivan, a study of 26 schools using Sex Respect is almost complete. “Our preliminary results from the students this past year have shown improvement,” she says.

Other observers cast doubt on the results. Douglas Kirby, research director at ETR, criticizes the original study design, noting that teenagers who are asked a question and told the “correct” answer in a class session—in this case, that they should delay sex until marriage—are likely to regurgitate that answer when asked again. “If a teacher emphasizes that it's wrong to have sex, kids will select the ‘correct’ answer,” Kirby says. “I wouldn't claim that Sex Respect doesn't work, but I would not claim that we have any evidence that it does.”

Whether any brand of sex education “works” is a hotly debated question in the professional journals. The journal *Pediatrics* last spring concluded that current studies show no evidence that sex education—in isolation—convinces teenagers to change their behavior. The report's authors wrote that sex education should be just one part of a comprehensive effort that includes the provision of reproductive health care, media campaigns and other programs.

Yet if sex education remains an important element in teen pregnancy-prevention efforts, the question then becomes: what sort of sex education?

Nancy Watzman is a Maryland-based freelance writer.

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By Denis MacShane

WARSAW, POLAND

THE LASER BEAM OF SUNLIGHT PIERCED THE clouds and hit my eyes just as my taxi turned to pass the Palace of Culture, Stalin's monstrously sublime architectural donation to Warsaw. Sitting in the front passenger's seat, I began to pull down the sun visor.

"No, please, don't touch," cried my taxi driver. "Radar ... not legal," he said, indicating the slim black radar detector, about the size of a Walkman, that was stuck between his visor and the roof.

"Not allowed in Poland.... Police make many stops.... Cars too slow," he said, touching the gas pedal of his Mercedes 300 SL, which accelerated effortlessly.

So this is free Poland, a country where the police now stop citizens from driving too fast instead of stopping them from meeting, organizing and publishing as in days gone by.

After a five-minute ride, the taxi put me down outside *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Election Gazette), which was launched just last June to promote Solidarity candidates in the elections and is now the country's best-selling newspaper.

"Forty thousand zlotys," said the taxi driver.

"You must be joking," I replied. Forty thousand zlotys are half a week's wages for a Polish worker. The much longer drive in from the airport the night before had cost only 18,000 zlotys, a fact I conveyed to the taxi driver.

"Yes, but this is big Mercedes," he shot back.

"So was the car last night," I countered, giving him 20,000 zlotys and feeling proud that I was making my small contribution to keeping Polish inflation under control.

In Western terms, we were squabbling over \$2, as the exchange rate early this year was around 15,000 zlotys to the dollar. So my Scottish meanness went hand in hand with economic virtue. No doubt Adam Smith would have approved.

The new, improved enemy: In miniature, this encounter offered a perfect paradigm of the Polish crisis—the hunt for hard currency, an obsession with Western gimmickry and style, and a desire on both sides to rip off one's partner in a trade.

Poland has won its political fight, but as the smoke clears over the corpse of Stalinism, a new and perhaps more redoubtable enemy takes the field. It is the "totalitarian market," to use the phrase of French intellectual-cum-entrepreneur Alain Minc, whose new book calling for some social limitation of capitalism is compulsory reading in France.

The intellectuals and agitators who fought so valiantly in the struggle against communism—Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, Janusz Onyskiewicz, Helena Luczywo, plus a network of comrades outside Poland, many of them forced to leave in the anti-Semitic purge of 1968—have won their anti-totalitarian war. This is the crowning achievement so far of the '60s generation, but shaping the economic peace requires new vision and talents.

Currently, mind-blowing blather about the need to embrace market capitalism abounds—as if swallowing the elixir was all that was needed to turn Poland into California, Warsaw into New York. Actually, Warsaw has some of the feel of New York, at least in its

From a totalitarian system to a totalitarian market?

smart Marriott and Holiday Inn hotel lobbies, where the silky tones of the West's preachers and practitioners of capitalism can be heard day and night.

There in one corner is Jeffrey Sachs, from Harvard University, a plausibly smooth number, paid for by the American-Hungarian financier George Soros and offering the government advice on how to move toward capitalism in one sharp go. Sachs, who has a public-relations flair for self-promotion unrivaled by any economist since John Kenneth Galbraith, lays great claim to have cured Bolivia of its hyperinflation.

If they were smart, the Poles would send a mission to La Paz to check up on Sachs' claims. There they would find food riots and a minimum wage of \$22 a month, which does not cover a tenth of the basic food and rent costs of a Bolivian worker. Life expectancy is 53 years, and the government has just declared a state of siege, suspending many democratic rights. However, the Bolivians have one way out: cocaine production is up. Although poppy-seed cakes are a Polish delicacy, not even Sachs has had the cheek to suggest that the Poles might insert themselves into the most profitable growth sector of international capitalism—the drug trade.

Actually, the Poles, no mean economists in their own right, are getting fed up with Sachs' boasting. In an extraordinary interview published recently in the London *Independent*, the Polish government's chief economist detailed the long list of suggestions—such as fixing the exchange rate to the dollar or freezing all wages—that have been put forward by Sachs and rejected by the Solidarity government.

Being patronized by Soviets for 40 years was bad enough; being condescended to by ultra right-wing economists, even if they do come from America, is hardly more acceptable.

Beware of foreigners bearing gifts: In another corner there is Rupert Murdoch, the black prince of yellow journalism, arriving to find what Polish niches might be available for his media empire. Murdoch owns the best-selling Hungarian magazine *Reform*, which has become a slushy Murdoch mix of soft porn and sensational stories. His real interest in Poland lies in trying to get franchises for satellite television, his current obsession in Europe.

What both Sachs and Murdoch bring, and why the red carpet is rolled out for them, is hard cash—or at least the distant dream of it. Actually, Sachs insists that his economic consultation fees are paid for in dollars, but the hint is always there that somewhere behind him are thousands of American investors longing to pour their money into Poland.

A comparison is often made with the Marshall Plan that helped relaunch the post-war West European economy. There are, however, some major differences.

Marshall Aid—leaving aside the debate about its political conditions—was basically a transfusion of blood to a weak but recognizably capitalist, market-oriented and functioning body. General Motors, Ford, DuPont and other American companies had major in-

POLAND

terests in Europe. Little wonder the enthusiasm of their representatives in Washington for Marshall Aid. In addition, Marshall Aid was big: about 2.5 percent of the American gross domestic product was transferred to West Europe in the late '40s.

None of these conditions exists in Poland. Not a transfusion of capital but a transplant of a completely new economic system is required. Yet U.S., European and Japanese multinationals have no direct interests in Poland to promote. And the aid offered by President Bush amounts to about 0.25 percent of the Pentagon budget. It is a miserable and miserly response to one of the most important political changes in the 20th century.

In addition to repudiating Sachs' vanities, Poles are also learning to be wary of Americans who come bearing gifts. Take the case of Barbara Piasecka Johnson, who promised Lech Walesa that she would buy the Lenin Shipyard and thus keep alive Solidarity's historic birthplace. In exchange, the Polish-born heiress to the Johnson & Johnson millions was treated as a savior by Walesa, invited to his house, feted in Gdansk and, like Sachs, enjoyed an immense public-relations puff in the world press.

Now she has spelled out her conditions for taking over the yard: half the workers would be dismissed, wages would be reduced to 40 cents an hour, there must be a no-strike pledge for five years. And she wants the yard for a nominal payment.

So American capital comes slowly and ungenerously and, when it does come, attaches brutal conditions that Latin American workers could testify to if Polish newspapers such as *Gazeta Wyborcza* had enough hard currency to send their excellent investigative journalists to Bolivia or Brazil.

Conditions that never change: The modernization of the Polish economy will require structural change and new work methods. This is apparent when you walk around Nowa Huta, the giant steel plant built in the '50s to show communist progress through working-class industrialization in contrast to the feckless Catholic chattering in nearby Krakow.

Nowa Huta turned into a working-class stronghold, all right, but one that eventually turned against the communist authorities. Workers point to a wall in the huge building housing the blast furnaces, through which tanks came in December 1981 to break the occupation in protest of Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski's repression of Solidarity. Again, it was the strike in May 1988 at Nowa Huta that signaled the return of Solidarity and the beginning of the process that led to the union's relegalization, the elections last summer and then the general revolution in East Europe.

But there's little reward for Nowa Huta workers for being the spear carriers for historic change. Twenty-eight thousand of them are employed to make 4.4 million tons of steel. In Britain less than a third of that number would produce the same tonnage, and in Japan or Korea the figure is even lower.

At the same time, environmental groups in Krakow would like to see Nowa Huta shut down completely, so poisonous are the plant's fumes to the lungs of young children and the beautiful Renaissance stonework of old Krakow.

Inside the plant, greasy filth prevails. Close to furnaces where the ore is melted—an inferno of heat, noise, flames and sparks—workers wear neither eye protectors nor ear muffs, standard wear in Western steel plants. In the administration blocks, the walls and floor are filthy from the dusty oily air. Windows are broken.

There is an air of squalor instead of bustling productive purpose. Surely somewhere in those 28,000 workers could be found a team of a hundred of so to clean up the place. Surely minimal safety precautions could be enforced by management or by Solidarity.

A touch of Japanese inner-factory egalitarianism and Swiss cleanliness would do wonders. Neither requires massive Western investment or the embrace of any particular capitalist model. In fact, the whole discussion on Poland, inside and outside the country, needs to be turned upside down. To talk of the market as the solution for Poland's needs is saying no more than that a man who has been thirsty for half a century needs a drink. The question is, should it be water or neat whiskey? To talk of Western market capitalism and the market economy begs these questions: which form of capitalism, which type of market economy?

Both Sweden and Argentina are capitalist states with free elections and market economies. So is the U.S. So is West Germany. So what? The differences between Swedish and Argentinian capitalism or between the welfare state and industrial democracy of West Germany and the squalid greed, poverty and illiteracy spawned by American-style market freedoms are immense.

Fork in the road: Must Poland take the Bolivian route, or is the Austrian alternative possible? Here the absence of an effective post-communist vision based on a socially responsible market economy is deeply felt. Robert Gates, former CIA deputy director general, is fond of saying that thousands of books have been written on moving from capitalism to communism but none on moving in the opposite direction.

The Poles, and the rest of the former Soviet imperium, are now writing these books on

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the hoof. Ninety-nine percent of the advice they are getting encourages them to adopt a Latin American solution. Welfare subsidies should be cut, kindergartens and hospitals converted to private profit, wages driven down, a mentality of greed encouraged.

Sachs wanted to privatize every Polish firm in the next two years. Rubbing their hands with glee at such a prospect were the old *nomenklatura*, who, as the only available managers, technicians and administrators, would be the principal beneficiaries of such a move. Sensibly, the Polish government rejected such a measure.

Instead, there is a fascinating debate about breaking up the state monopolies, but in a way that does not completely disenfranchise workers. Employee stock-option plans (ESOPs), workers cooperatives and worker directorships are actively discussed as alternatives to the crudities of oligarchic private own-

ership. Zbigniew Bujak, the legendary auto-worker who led the Solidarity underground until his capture in 1985, has just quit as president of the Warsaw region of Solidarity to set up a workers' bank-cum-insurance company. In the basement of the Solidarity headquarters in Gdansk sits the union's executive committee as a deputy minister discusses different forms of ownership with them. But will the International Monetary Fund and multinational cash flow in to support an economy based on ESOPs and workers on the board?

Upstairs, Walesa sits in softer chairs in his office receiving an unending flow of visitors. In each country he visits he admires and praises the economic system of his hosts. In Poland he talks of family enterprises, mom-and-pop shops, as the way forward. Genius he may be and a sheet anchor of stability for the Solidarity government, but economic-policy wizard he isn't.

In the corner of his office is a statue of Josef Pilsudski, the pre-war Polish leader, and many believe it is only a matter of time before Walesa runs for president of Poland. He waves this aside, saying he would like to go back to being a simple electrician. He also stresses that at the Solidarity congress in April he will support moves to separate the union from the government.

This would be an interesting stance, because what is missing in Poland—despite a revolution brought about by a massive working-class upheaval, fighting for egalitarian democratic rights against a hierarchical monopoly of power—is a coherent political expression of Poland's working people.

The Solidarity government is now a coalition, but at some stage parties will emerge. The Catholic Church, under the conservative Cardinal Josef Glemp, is waiting in the wings. So far it has made no bid for its traditional areas of jurisdiction: women's fertility and

children's education. But how long will this clerical reticence last?

Solidarity offices in towns resemble political resource centers, staffed by students and young activists. By Western standards they are not trade unions. Solidarity does exist in workplaces, but its membership is hovering at around 2.3 million, compared with the 10 million of its heady days a decade ago. Attempts are being made to link up Solidarity units employed in the same industry or company to form industrial unions.

But such a structure, more akin to what exists in Sweden or West Germany, is opposed by the regional activists and power-holders. It also runs counter to the supporters of Catholic trade unions that want Solidarity to become a Catholic labor confederation modeled on those in Belgium and France. The debate over what form of union, like that over what form of capitalism—and the two are more connected than one might imagine—will also help determine Poland's future direction. Will it move toward a Latin American model of an oligarchy on a base of exploitation of workers and farm laborers, or a social-democratic model akin to that existing across the Baltic?

All the advice, bell-ringing and the resources of Atlantic capital herald the former. Unfortunately, there is little prospect at present for the latter—a society based on democracy, the market and solidarity. □

Denis MacShane works for the Geneva-based International Metalworkers Federation. He wrote a book on Solidarity that was published in 1981, and he was arrested and briefly imprisoned while taking funds to the underground union in 1982. This is his first visit to Poland since then.

“Taking On General Motors

by Eric Mann is a great book that offers hope and encouragement during these difficult times. I have marched with the Van Nuys workers and have seen their impressive organizing first-hand. But **Taking On General Motors** takes you beyond where the eye can see to share the complexities of how social movements are built. If you are an environmental or peace activist, a labor or community organizer, a high school or college teacher, or if you are a member of the Rainbow Coalition, I strongly urge you to read this book.”

REV. JESSE JACKSON

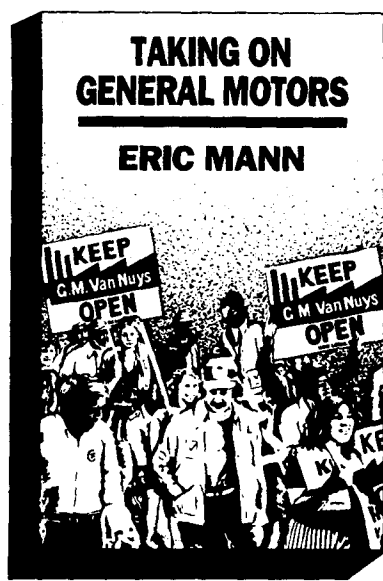
Taking on General Motors is a fascinating story whose lessons go far beyond one union local or even the UAW as a whole. Its methodology and analysis are invaluable for training a new generation of labor and community organizers to think strategically.

Tony Mazzochi, Sec.Treas.
Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers Union

Taking On General Motors analyzes the UAW Campaign to Keep GM Van Nuys Open. — a movement of Chicano, African-American, White and Asian auto workers and their community allies that has kept the plant open by threatening GM with a boycott of its products in Los Angeles.

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Taking On General Motors is written by Eric Mann, a veteran of CORE and SDS, and a direct participant in the movement he analyzes. It weaves history, politics, organizing, labor and ethnic studies into a rich and complex tapestry.



Taking On General Motors is a real page turner and eye opener... I began at six at night and the next thing I knew it was two in the morning . . . I laughed, I cried, I learned and I loved every minute of it . . . It reads like a novel . . . It reads like a novel.

Readers' Comments

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Farrakhan

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from NOI's methods?

Reasons to hope: “In order to turn addicts around you have to deal with the total human being, especially the spiritual component,” said Dr. Abdul Alim Muhammad, the surgeon who heads the NOI's Washington, D.C., chapter and who is the prime mover of the highly praised anti-drug program that has cleaned up a drug-infested neighborhood.

“Our people need a reason to hope and to aspire for great things, but this society provides them with very few of those reasons,” Muhammad explained. “We in the NOI not only explain why drug use is wrong, we also provide them with new aspirations that transcend their personal concerns. We convince them how much they are needed to help raise their people out of the hells of North America.”

The NOI's success is no mystery to David Allen, former executive director of a Chicago drug-treatment program. “They indoctrinate people into their ideology, supply continuous social reinforcement and exert a totalitarian control over personal thought processes,” he said. “Any program could be successful with that kind of setup. The real trick is to be effective without such totalitarian methods. Surely the answer to drug addiction is not to turn all addicts into Black Muslims.”

It's a safe bet that few of those rappers sampling Farrakhan's speeches would willingly submit themselves to the disciplined lifestyle required by NOI membership. As a strictly sectarian belief system, the NOI has inherent barriers to mass participation. And the youth culture's pseudo-embrace of NOI doctrine is arguably just another sign of the free-floating anxiety that is evident throughout this nation. □

By Paul Hockenos

Tamás Krausz is a member of the Hungarian Socialist Party and a founding member of the Left Alternative, a group begun in 1988 by Marxist intellectuals who had broken with the old regime. He is also a professor of history in the department of Soviet and East European studies at the University of Budapest. His critical biography of Joseph Stalin has recently appeared in the Soviet Union, and his biography of Leon Trotsky is the first of its kind to be published in Hungary. Paul Hockenos interviewed him in Budapest in mid-March.

March 25 marks the first "free" parliamentary election in Hungary since 1947. How would you describe the form of democracy that is replacing single-party rule?

I can't imagine political democracy without economic democracy and social equality. Revolutions in Eastern Europe have always been political rather than social revolutions. Everywhere in the world the events in Eastern Europe have been referred to as a revolution. I just can't agree with that. If people really want to use that term, then they would have to say that it is a conservative revolution that is happening here. The traditional, authoritarian structures have been swept out, but I am afraid that the old Stalinist structures are being replaced by national conservative structures not a great deal more democratic than their predecessors.

The form itself is based on Western models of multiparty, parliamentary democracy. The fact that there are a lot of parties, however, in no way insures democracy, as we in Central Europe know from our experience between the wars. Certainly there are advantages to it. This type of multiparty system will help us to prevent the monopolization of power by one party. New interest groups can now openly make demands and represent their membership.

At the same time, a new ruling party has emerged, based on a compromise between the different political elites that have pushed the old powers aside. Now there will be fights and open debates in parliament between rival parties, but it is still decision-making from above with only minimal participation from the people. You must understand that we in Hungary and Eastern Europe in general don't have any tradition of bourgeois democracy. It's not by chance that politicians are afraid that the transition may not take place peacefully.

There are 60 parties in Hungary, 17 of which are running in the election. Even among the most popular parties, the membership is very small, ranging from 4,000 to 50,000. Recent polls show a third of eligible voters still undecided. How do you explain this?

The changes that have occurred in Hungary have come from above, from the party itself. In contrast to the rest of Eastern Europe, the people played no part in the process. Hence they are alienated from this new system that has been created for them. Most people aren't familiar with the major parties' programs; many can't even remember their names. They don't feel that these parties are really for them. The reason for this is that the parties simply don't have any grass-roots support beneath them. Nor do any of the parties have a program that can lead the country out of its present crisis. In Hungary we have had reforms for 20 years now—permanent reform, you might say. So when Hungarians hear the word "reform," it doesn't mean anything to them.

The future government, however, might lay the ground for a real social movement here.

Can Hungary's left resurrect itself in the midst of a conservative revolution?

Economic policy will continue to be dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and I think that the unemployment and the horrifying exploitation of the country will sooner or later—and I believe sooner, maybe within two years—bring about a very strong mass movement. But it is difficult to predict whether it will be right or left. It could be both.

The three parties most likely to play leading roles in the next government are the Free Democrats, the Hungarian Democratic Forum and the Small Holders Party. While the three represent very different political cultures, their programs seem to have more similarities among them than differences. How do you see it?

There are really no major differences among them at this point. Each party has three slogans: the nation, the market and democracy. And, of course, also on their flags is Western

EAST BLOC

integration and anti-communism, which includes all forms of leftism. In unison the parties demand that state ownership be transformed into private ownership. They want to create a managerial bureaucracy and confine debate to those people who will be members of this new class. Once they expell the old communists, they can sit in their seats instead. In fact, this process is already well underway.

Their other basic program is the management of the country's balance of payments and the obedient payment of our debts and interest to the IMF. There are some conflicting stands on the relationship to inflation and unemployment, but these differences exist within each party rather than among the parties. In almost every party there is a left and a right wing, which have more in common with their respective wings in rival parties than they do with each other.

But even within this limited diversity, the parties talk only about the creation of unemployment. They offer no solution to it. It is posed simply as a question of whether there will be 50,000 or 500,000 unemployed.

The strongest party at the moment is the Democratic Forum, which is campaigning with an overtly nationalistic, populist, Christian message. Why is this so popular? Who are they appealing to?

The Democratic Forum, which itself came out of the old Kadarist Socialist Workers Party, is using militant anti-communism and Christian conservatism to appeal to people who live mostly in small provincial towns and villages. Christian nationalistic values and traditional community values have deep roots in Hungary, especially among this stratum of the population.

Its program is eclectic, uniting some of the most dangerous traditions of Hungarian history within it. A potent anti-Semitism also exists in this tradition, which Democratic Forum is using to its advantage in the campaign. No doubt it will give them a boost on election day.

So does this brand of nationalism pose a threat in Hungary?

In Eastern Europe all types of nationalism are dangerous. During the Kadar era outbreaks of nationalism were suppressed, and now it's all coming forth during liberalization. This is Eastern Europe's democratization.

Hungary is experiencing a wave of anti-

Semitism unprecedented over the last four decades. It's in the schools, on the streets. I'm sure that you've seen the graffiti yourself on the election posters of Jewish candidates. The parties and the media have waged such an effective anti-left campaign that anti-communism and anti-Semitism have become associated in many peoples' minds. In left-wing Jewish circles, there is fear of the possibility of a white terror.

But the Free Democrats, certainly not leftists, are also a target of anti-Semitism. Yet they are almost as popular as the Democratic Forum, having climbed steadily in the polls since October.

The party's leaders are mostly Budapest intellectuals, many ex-Marxists and ex-Communists of Jewish origin. But don't forget that popularity in the polls doesn't reflect a real popular social base. The Free Democrats, for example, have under 20,000 members.

While Democratic Forum is at least a little cautious about the pace of privatization and the sell-off of national property, the Free Democrats are calling for a full opening of the economy to Western capital as soon as possible. Their logic is: "We must be strong and forceful in bringing about these reforms, and the sooner the better. It's going to be tough for you—there's going to be high unemployment—but in a decade or so things will be much better." They actually admit that this course will put half a million people out of work! These policies, combined with their own strong anti-communist rhetoric, will only fuel the anti-Semitism that they are already experiencing.

The Small Holders is the party least known about. They have historical roots in pre-communist Hungary, unlike the other two parties, which are only a year and a half old. How would you describe their politics?

They are very conservative, calling back on traditions straight from feudal capitalism. This is one reason for their popularity. They say that they will simply dismantle all of the agricultural cooperatives and return all farms and property to their pre-1947 owners. In my opinion, this would be disastrous. The country doesn't have the infrastructure, the machinery, to support the private farmer-based system that they advocate.

Does the Socialist Party offer a viable alternative?

Not at this point. There are several factions within the reformed party, one of which I belong to. But the present leadership backs the same Thatcherite policies that the other parties do. Under this leadership, the present government implements the economic policy of the Free Democrats and uses their language as effectively as the Free Democrats could hope to themselves.

So how do you envision the post-election coalition?

The Socialist Party will certainly be in the opposition. Otherwise, the three biggest parties will redivide power among themselves and probably also bring in a few of the smaller parties like the Social Democrats, the Christian Democrats or the Christian Nationalists. In light of the magnitude of the problems that they are confronting, it's going to be next to impossible to have a stable government with so many parties. I see their policies lasting maybe a year or two before mass demonstrations overthrow them or force a new election.

How would you describe your group, the Left Alternative?

The Left Alternative, which is not a party, was founded in 1988 by Marxist intellectuals who had broken with the old regime. In order to prevent Hungary from having only right-wing parties and movements in the future, we wanted to form a non-sectarian socialist alternative to capitalism and Stalinism. We do not, for example, consider the authoritarian system of the past as socialist. The group is still quite small, some hundred intellectuals, but we have representatives in most of the parties, at the national round table and in the workers-council movement.

At the top of our program is the rejection of the old and new bureaucratic elite, the prevention of inflation, unemployment and state as well as private capitalist exploitation. Rather than the privatization of state ownership, we urge its socialization, the putting of state property and industry under the self-governing administration of those people who use it. The planned privatization is nothing less than stealing from the people and the creation

The anti-left campaign has been so effective that anti-communism and anti-Semitism have become associated in many people's minds.

of a new ruling class. We can't accept this policy's legitimization because the people never voted for it.

What traditions and theorists inform your program?

Basically all of those who have contributed to the progressive traditions of human society. Aristotle, Marx, Luxemburg, Lenin, Trotsky, Lukacs and the left Social Democrats are central.

We're using some of Gramsci's theories, for example, to locate different forms of civil society, grass-roots forms of self-governing democracy, in the workplace and community as well as in national traditions and organizations. We're looking closely at the years between 1945 and 1948, as well as the 1956 revolution, to find progressive forms of democracy that can be built upon.

But at the moment there is no popular political culture to support the Left Alternative's agenda. The theories, thinkers and even words that you use have been severely discredited. Can the left revive itself?

Unfortunately, all forms of socialism have become equated with Stalinism, and this must be overcome. The policies of the new government, however, will give rise to a new left movement. Since there is no mass movement now, there can't be a truly left-wing movement. Left parties with masses are either caricatures or tragedies. And at the moment there is not even one mass left party.

In the short term, I am pessimistic. But in the long run, a broad left movement will have to emerge through which the people can defend their interests. □

Paul Hockenos is *In These Times'* correspondent in Eastern Europe.

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Of all the traditional social movements, feminism is the least likely to be sponsored by national governments. In the West, the contemporary women's movement began as a series of informal groups that came together around various publications and organizations and slowly moved toward politics. In the Soviet Union, until the mid-'80s, such organizations of civil society could not exist or had to exist clandestinely. There were, of course, government-sponsored women's organizations, just as there were official trade unions, but the idea of legal informal organization was anathema before glasnost. Even now such groups and publications exist outside the law, on the fringes of official society. As a result, Soviet feminism is in the earliest stages of development.

In October 1988, a group of American journalists, including the editor of *In These Times*, visited Moscow and asked to meet with a representative of the Soviet Union's women's movement. "Well, yes, there is a Soviet feminist," they were told, "but she is out of the country right now."

During a June 1989 conference in Moscow on "Women, Peace and Ecology" sponsored by the Soviet Women's Committee, a young Moscow-based journalist introduced his Soviet women friends to a group of American feminists. The result: a meeting between the Soviets and Bella Abzug, Amy Swerdlow (Sarah Lawrence College), Blanche Cook (City University of New York), and Cora Weiss (Women for Meaningful Summits) to discuss the nature of the Soviet women's movement.

Following is a continuation of the conversation that began in Moscow as legal scholar, journalist and activist Nina Belyaeva shares her views on feminism in the Soviet Union.

By Nina Belyaeva

The idea of conducting even a brief survey was abandoned as soon as my Soviet colleagues heard the word "feminism." Even the smartest, most active and enlightened women activists of *perestroika* twitched their shoulders in disdain and raised their eyebrows: what do you need *that* for? The young, pretty ones pursed their lips in a particularly offended way.

People think feminism is for peevish and harassed losers, a sort of compensation for deficiencies in their personal lives. A real woman should be constantly surrounded only by admiring men, and women's issues should be handled by women who haven't got anything else to do. Besides, even the word itself sounds somehow obscene, shameful. I wouldn't be surprised if many associate it with lesbianism.

Only recently I, too, would have derided with an offensive smirk the proposal to discuss feminism. Why has feminism become saddled somewhere in our consciousness with the tiresome image of something strident, untidy and garish—a small but vociferous procession of women declaring war on the opposite sex? Who requires me to envision feminism—whose official stock epithet is "bourgeois"—like that?

The absence of the independent, organized, active role of women in our politics is the last bulwark of the totalitarian iceberg that has inhibited a normal, natural life in civil society. In parting the "iron curtain," returning to the world and opening our borders to universal, global processes, we al-

The unmarked road to Soviet feminism

ready have reclaimed charitable foundations and ecological, religious and human-rights movements. Amazingly, this immense force of Western and world history is practically non-existent in our vast civilized country. Now it is the women's movement's turn.

There is no need to give a detailed comparison of Western organizations and the Soviet Women's Councils. Formed by direct request of the Communist Party, locked in the hierarchical system headed by the Soviet Women's Committee and not having independent status, those "councils" are plugged into the administrative-party mechanism—and the majority of them "procure" and "distribute" benefits through industrial shops and departments. While this may seem like savagery to Western women, the work is commonplace and necessary considering our constant shortage of goods.

The councils distribute tickets to children's theaters and New Year's parties, vouchers to summer camps, orders for foodstuffs, furniture and imported boots. There is a bitter irony in that without this kind of distributor many women simply would not have access to these things. "Feminism" emerges when women are capable of not only sensing and condemning injustice and unequal treatment but of taking charge without waiting for permission—of solving such issues in practice.

The state and us: "It's hard to talk with [Soviet] representatives at international meetings," said Bella Abzug, one of America's most seasoned politicians and activists. "They respond to every question with 'We don't need feminism. The Soviet authorities provide us with everything we need.'"

Yes, we have the right to have abortions, but with savage pain, tears and humiliation. Yes, we have free natal medical care, if you discount the necessary gifts to doctors and nurses and the fact that maternity hospitals are breeding grounds for infection. What Soviet woman would turn down a chance to give birth in America and pay however much it costs for decent conditions and a healthy child?

Yes, we have a "system of women's

facilities" and state-subsidized nursery schools, but what mother doesn't dream of a non-working grandmother or a nanny for her child, so as not to hear the pediatrician drone: "Nothing in particular—just the normal nursery-school cough?"

Yes, Western countries have "bourgeois" governments that are blind to the interests of the working people. But perhaps, not claiming to be able to solve all the social problems, they offer the minimum—won by the women's movement—and then step onto the sidelines as if to say, "You do the rest."

That's when social movements arise—movements that do what the state is unable—or reluctant—to do. Our resources are also extremely limited, so why didn't the same scheme work? Why hasn't a women's movement arisen in our country?

"Feminism is a movement of free, creative individuals, created by the entire system of culture," says Elvira Novikova, a member of the U.N. Committee to Eliminate Discrimination Against Women. "But here the function of bearing children has traditionally been celebrated as the basic and main function of women."

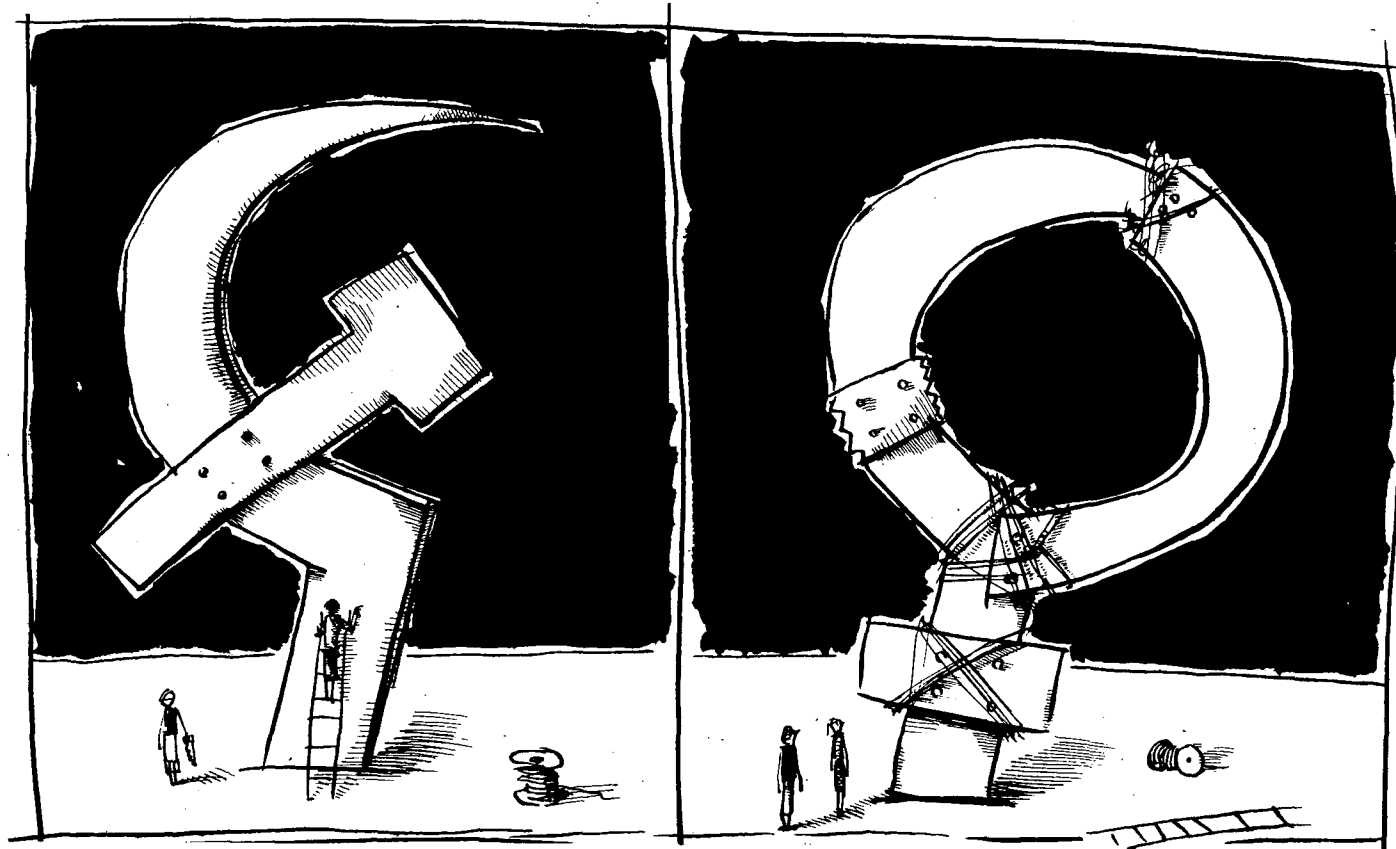
"The difficulty of combining women's participation in the workforce and their role

in the family is resolved simply by sending women back to the family. This isn't emancipation but the worst kind of slavery—depriving women of their professional lives and dooming them to serve their families—always a dependent role," continues Novikova.

"At the beginning of the century, in pre-revolutionary Russia, a movement of aristocratic women known as Equality began to foster the idea of equal rights among working-class women. The party and trade unions being formed tapped the enormous energetic potential of the women's proletariat masses, and by 1903 the Social Democratic Workers Party included almost all women's demands in its platform. Thus women's democratic proletarian consciousness developed within the framework of the party movement—there was no independent milieu for it."

Will history repeat itself? According to Larisa Kuznetsova, journalist and author of books about the position of women in the USSR, "We simply couldn't have a women's movement. For that you must perceive yourself as independent and identify your particular needs as women, whereas in the haste of revolutionary renewal individuals were generally considered part of the masses, as builders of the new society. In all our thinking we visualized the people as a monolith of workers. Add to this the totalitarian mentality governed by slogans and drum beats and our traditional religious readiness to believe in anything at all, to accept and assert that 'everything is fine.'"

"Yes, this was true of everyone," admits Kuznetsova. "But women are more suggestible and susceptible to hypnosis. It's easier to persuade them, and that's why women's minds remain domains of servility, obedience and faith. Women live in an ideal world—look who fills their temples. The need to be saved, sheltered and protected—women's willingness to submit to influence, to be ruled—permits women to be manipulated with impunity, which is what has been done throughout [Soviet] history. First women were told to drive tractors, then to operate steam engines, then to jump from parachutes. In the '60s they were summoned en masse into the factories. And now, in the face of a new law that allows women to



Soviet feminist Nina Belyaeva

stay home until their children are three years old, they'll be chased back to the kitchen stove.

"Food for the spirit and values have always been offered from without—from ready-made recipes. And Soviet women were taught to believe they were happy. A women's movement will not appear in our country until women have an opportunity to end the race between work and home—to focus on themselves, to understand and listen to their own voices."

In the '70s in Leningrad, a group of like-minded women came together: artists, poets, linguists, journalists and translators who were able to see the humiliating, defenseless position of Soviet women. They tried to conceptualize the reasons for it, to seek out ways of liberating women's consciousness. They put out publications—first an almanac entitled *Women and Russia* and then the journal *Russian Woman*. They formed a club called *Maria* and published a theoretical magazine of the same name that tried to unite the liberation of women with the ideals of Christianity. But the group was short-lived. In May and June of 1980, just before the Summer Olympics, all of its organizers were expelled from the Soviet Union on the charges of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda. Evidently, our official representatives at international congresses were right—we didn't need feminism. Or maybe our state didn't.

Addressing the disbelievers: Only after I became acquainted with living, bourgeois feminists from the U.S. did I realize that I had always subscribed to their views.

However extreme the tendencies of the Western feminist movement to put the contribution of the "fairer" sex into the "savings bank" of creative potential of humanity, the movement remains international. It is pointless to divorce oneself from it with old dogmas, but it may be a while before the average Soviet woman is able to say proudly: "I am a feminist."

As a confessed feminist, it is not my intention to fight men or women who do not share my views and who celebrate the ideal of being a housewife. To have a rich, comfortable home, to be a joyful hostess is a most worthy ideal. But I have different ones: professionalism, creativity, self-development and social responsibility.

In the evenings, my five-year-old son and I make his favorite cheese pancakes, but I am sure that I will give him immeasurably more if I succeed as a scholar, journalist, legal specialist and practicing lawyer. Can I give my son the gift of the whole world if I look at it only through the kitchen window? We are obliged to pass on to our children the whole world, and not just a filling dinner, a lovely after-school corner and the "pedigree" of being from a good family.

We can teach our children to live justly and generously in this world if we ourselves begin to rule it more freely, assuredly and rightly. Goodness and affection will not be lost in this—and the airy veil of femininity looks even better on heads proudly held high.

My scholar friends do not share my optimism concerning the possibility of a women's movement in our country. The women's groups, I am told, still amount to a drop in

the bucket—with few members and without clear goals or independence—all of them intellectual clubs. In addition, most women come home from work so exhausted that they don't have the energy for clubs or "movements."

Shortages mean ever-growing queues and more time spent shopping, plus gloomy economic forecasts and the need to keep the family in good order. So perhaps feminism is only for a well-fed society. When the bare minimum exists at home, then people can find time for social movements.

Lacking a feminine touch: The traditional logic—that of both the Supreme Soviet and the government—is that when the country gets better, things will be easier for women. But maybe the reverse is true. The country cannot extricate itself from its predicament until it makes women interested in these changes. Otherwise neither agriculture, which employs mostly overstrained women, nor industry, in which more than half of the workforce is women who see no professional prospects for career growth, will be able to progress.

It's unlikely that the situation will change unless we ourselves begin to change it—not by calling for cavalry attacks or setting up commissions and subcommittees but by taking specific, small, powerful steps—by putting the restructured society in order, like a house after repairs.

Maybe it is the feminine view that statesmen lack: doesn't the authoritarian economy stem from the male habit of giving orders? And doesn't the entire administrative system stem from the male desire to reign supreme?

Some point out that women in politics are renowned for their conservatism—but that's because they are the exceptions there, and in order to reach the top in a male-dominated system, women had to outdo men. If we were to remove the condition of harsh competition, women could enter politics with their own female values intact. Even *perestroika* lacks a woman's perspective. Not physically—women's hands were always willingly used in the many economic experiments—but intellectually.

Women are resourceful, sensitive, versatile, able to make ends meet on little income—they are sympathetic to the weak and willing to reconcile opposing sides. For there to be a choice of candidates for the Supreme Soviet, we must give women the opportunity to show what they can do, to prove themselves as organizers. Even if there are no signs of a mass movement, the first women's associations have appeared without urging—associations that can raise true future leaders, state figures with female faces. Then the women in our country will have a choice and a place in the public hierarchy worthy of their intelligence, experience, education and creativity.

No longer will they have to struggle in battle—instead they will preserve their femininity and return it to society. Maybe then society will finally understand that when women flourish, the nation gains. □

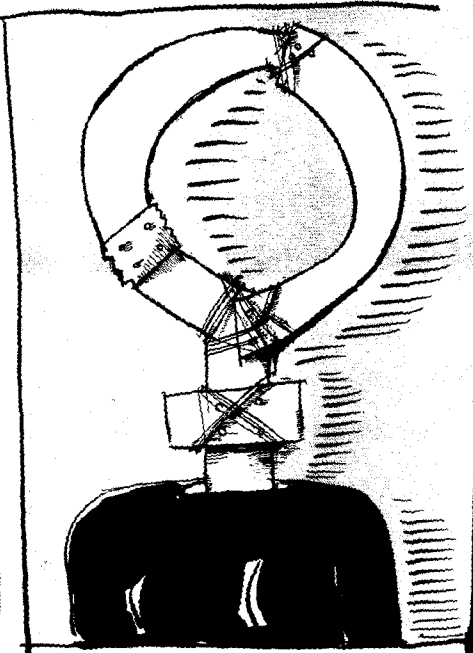
Nina Belyaeva is a researcher at the Institute of State and Law of the Academy of Sciences in Moscow. She is currently touring the U.S. and is helping to organize a Soviet-American women's summit to be held April 30 through May 15 in New York and Washington, D.C.

First women's campaign breeds initiative

How did Soviet women find Larisa Kuznetsova and propel her into politics?

"They found me through my articles, through the editorial offices of *New Times* weekly. They invited me to 'meet my readers' over a cup of tea, at home, in Zhukovskiy, near Moscow. Then they officially invited me to their 'women's council' and suggested I become their candidate. It's surprising how accurately they grasped the situation and formulated their missions; they knew what they wanted and I followed them."

The news that the women's council (headed by Olga Bessolova) at the Central Aerodynamic Institute had nominated its own independent candidates to run in the Supreme Soviet elections came like a bolt from the blue. Resuscitated women's councils were a sensation. They decided soberly to assess the situation in society as a whole, to understand women's roles in it and to set feasible tasks for themselves. They organized lectures and meetings with electors. They registered as women's councils in their cities, and when they were turned down at the regional level, they organized meetings and collected signatures in Reutovo, Pushchino, Zagorsk and Zhukovskiy—



towns not far from Moscow.

This was the first Soviet electoral campaign sponsored by women—and even if it didn't end in success, it was an invaluable experience. Deeper insight was gained into the goals and means—and the need for an independent organization. If we ever write a history of the Soviet women's movement, it will begin with this campaign. Following the campaign the Women's Initiatives Club was founded and attached to the Fund of Social Initiatives in Moscow's Sevastopolsky District.

The club arranges lectures and discussions, teaches self-help techniques and stronger self-confidence and explores job opportunities.

What do we have today—and what of the future movement?

• Olga Voronina's group, Lotus, consists of women scientists dealing with "the woman question" in professional terms—from the division of labor in society into traditionally "male" and "female" roles to specific sociological studies of how women work. "Lotus" stands for Liberation from Social Stereotypes, through internal discussions, exchanges of ideas and new information. Although each

member works on her own topic, Lotus is a close-knit collective open to everyone who shares the same views and convictions.

• Tatyana Ryabikina's association, Women's Creative Effort, supports and promotes its members' creative talents and abilities in every artistic, literary and humanitarian field. The association counts on members of creative unions, professionals and anyone else who wants to improve her workmanship in a creative sphere or help others to do so. Founding members include all Soviet creative unions, the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, the Cultural Foundation and the Soviet Women's Committee.

• The most legally organized group is the Preobrazheniye (Transfiguration) women's club, formed by Diana Medman in the system of the Academy of Sciences. The club's rules are registered, and the club itself has been granted the rights of a judicial person and has its own bank account. Its aim is to promote women's personal, spiritual and civil interests and to "enhance women's role and initiative ... in the sociocultural spheres." The club is an open system and supports the initiatives of its members and all those who would like to cooperate with it. It champions women's self-development and children's programs. Children's art studios and a logopedic center already are in operation. The club has branches in Rostov and Leningrad and finances its own programs, maintaining and promoting women's spirit of enterprise.

• Olga Lipovskaya of Leningrad publishes the only "samizdat" handwritten magazine for women, *Zhenskoye Chteniyeye* (Women's Reading). The first issues contained poems, short stories, editorials, articles by Western feminists and excerpts from the *Zhenshchiny i Rossiya* (Women and Russia) almanac. Crossing over to the women's movement from the human-rights movement, Lipovskaya maintains that women's conditions cannot be seriously improved without restructuring the entire social system.

• Bessolova's group's new role as a sociopolitical civic women's association still fulfills all the old functions of a traditional women's council—to assist, demand, procure and distribute. "There is no escaping from this," says Bessolova. "After all, the women who elected us expect help, which is why we must deal with canteens, recreation rooms and order departments, as well as women's working conditions, broader benefits for mothers in next year's collective agreement and school education. We have to patch up holes, do other people's work—too much effort is spent in vain. And yet the women's councils are an established structure, and it must be used."

"We are discussing the establishment of a union of women's councils in Russia's scientific centers, an association of women engineers, a union of mothers, a movement for biologically clean products for children," said Bessolova in an interview with a local factory newspaper. "It is vital that women be able to influence the country's most serious decisions. Maybe then the balance will be tipped in favor of the family, the child, the human being."

—N.B.

EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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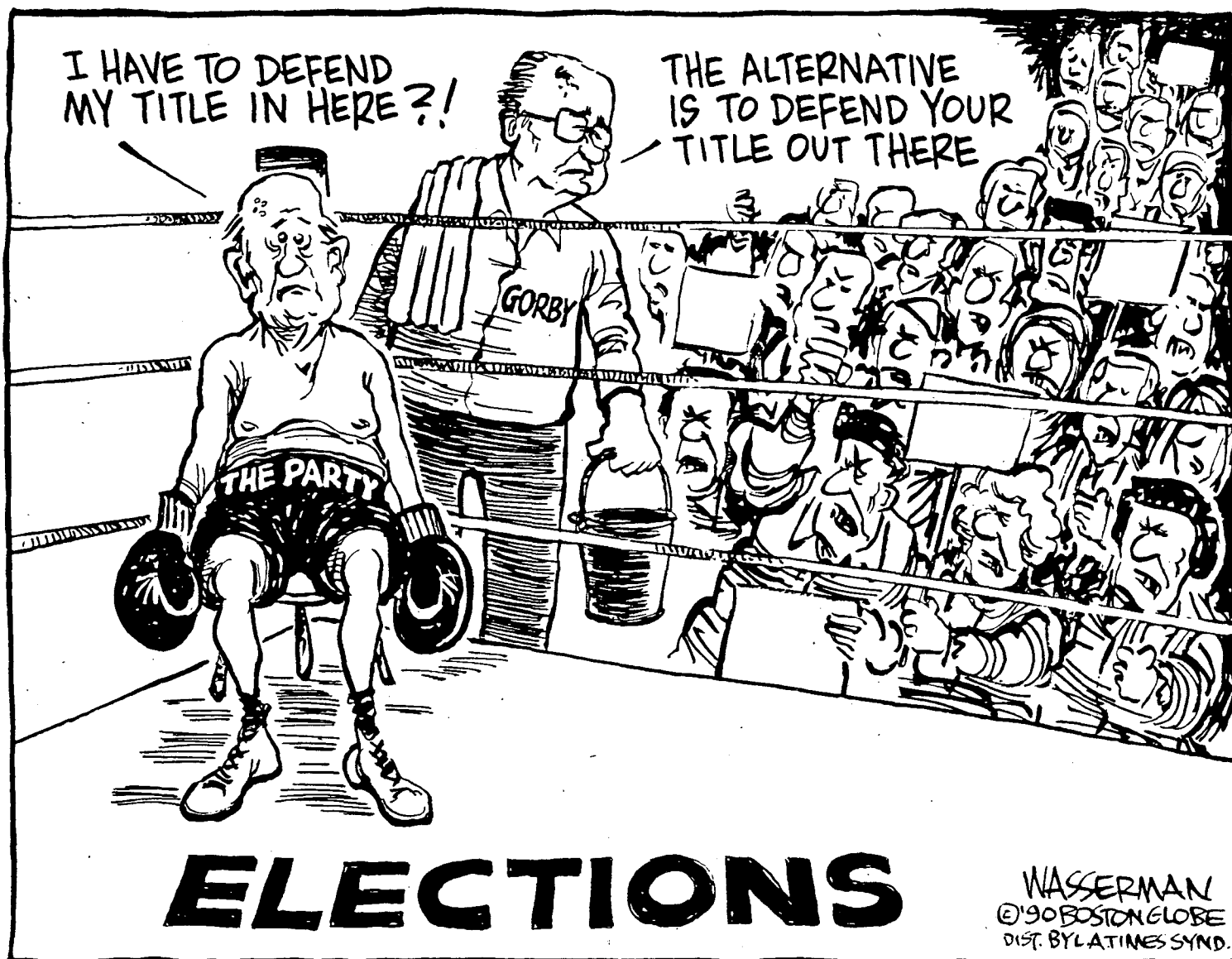
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The Soviet government takes a big step toward democratic rule

Last week, in what Mikhail Gorbachov called the most important decision in Soviet history, the USSR parliament voted—1,817 to 33, with 61 abstentions—to establish an independent presidency. It then voted by a slightly smaller margin to replace Article 6 of the Soviet Constitution—which gave the Communist Party a monopoly on political power—with a constitutional promise of political pluralism. The new version reads: "The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, other party, trade union and youth organizations, other social organizations and mass movements, shall participate through their representatives elected to the Soviet of Peoples Deputies as well as in other ways, in shaping the policies of the Soviet state and in running state and social affairs."

An attempt to remove the words "Communist Party" received 1,067 to 906 votes but was not adopted because a two-thirds majority was required. The vote reflected the results of a just-released poll showing that only 4 percent of the Soviet people believe that the party is acting in their best interest.

The vote on the presidency was as important as Gorbachov claimed, because it deprives the party of assured control over the Soviet government by providing—after the first five-year term—for the direct popular election of the president. Similarly, the new constitutional article implicitly—though not yet officially—gives organizations and movements in civil society the right, previously enjoyed only by the party, to participate in affairs of state. Although fully anticipated by recent discussions among reformers in and out of the party, the two votes are important milestones in the transfer of power from the party to the government and in the process of increasing civil liberties and encouraging popular initiatives.

As president, Gorbachov will have duties similar to those of his Western counterparts. He will have the power to propose legislation

to the parliament, negotiate treaties with foreign countries and veto laws passed by parliament; any veto, however, will be subject to a two-thirds override. In addition he will be able to declare a state of emergency or martial law, but only after consulting a republic's presidium and with the consent of two-thirds of the Supreme Soviet. And he will have power to declare war in consultation with the Supreme Soviet. Parliament also voted to separate legislative, judicial and executive powers for the first time. The president, for example, will appoint but will no longer be able to remove the chief justice, and the presidium will no longer be able to issue legislative decrees.

Roy Medvedev, the distinguished Soviet historian and former dissident—himself a deputy in the Soviet parliament—told the *Chicago Tribune* that the current situation in the Soviet Union is analogous to that of the United States during the Depression of the '30s. "The crisis our society is going through now is very similar to your crisis then," he said, adding that "the Soviet president should give a new impetus to socialism just as Franklin Roosevelt then gave one to capitalism." Medvedev hopes that Gorbachov will "borrow a lot from the American Constitution" and that it will "follow pluralism" from now on.

Unlike many parliamentary delegates, however, Medvedev favored Gorbachov's election by parliament. In several countries, he said, presidents have been elected for their first terms by national assemblies, "so this is not a violation of general democratic principles." Even so, and despite near-universal support for the general direction of Gorbachov's proposals, reformers voiced fears of a return to dictatorial rule.

These fears reflect a deep-seated distrust of anything the party proposes and a desire to achieve a government of laws in which there are guarantees of popular access to government and control over social-policy decisions. But there can be no absolute guarantees of democracy, either in the Soviet Union, which is just now moving toward a government of laws, or in the West. Medvedev made this point well: "The main guarantee, as in the United States, is the general political awareness of the nation."

For now, at least, the Soviet government is groping in the right direction.

In These Times believes that to guarantee our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, Americans must take greater control over our nation's basic economic and foreign policy decisions. We believe in a socialism that fulfills rather than subverts the promise of American democracy, where social needs and rationality, not corporate profit and greed, are the operative principles. Our pages are open to a wide range of views, socialist and non-socialist, liberal and conservative. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

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LETTERS

Hysteria

ON MANY LEVELS OF OUR SOCIETY THERE IS A dialogue regarding the investigation and litigation of child sexual abuse cases. This includes clinicians, lawyers, judges, legislators, families, state protective agencies and journalists. The most difficult aspect of the discussion tends to be the emotional reactions to the tabooed and still often avoided subject of sexual abuse. I applaud your paper for beginning to address an issue that directly affects one in every four children in our country. Unfortunately, Alexander Cockburn's column (*ITT*, Feb. 14) does not contribute to the dialogue.

Cockburn's article is founded on a lack of knowledge and what appears to be a very angry bias. His opinion is not terribly strange, and the fact that it is not based on research and a consideration of the rather extraordinary complications of these cases is not strange either. I do think it odd, however, that you would print it. A conservative stance on the topic is a vital part of the dialogue if it is well supported with argument. Cockburn does not argue well enough to do his opinions justice.

I do not want to take his article apart point by point, but rather I would like to suggest that we look critically at the underlying, unaddressed issue. Namely, how are we to understand the act of child sexual molestation? The vast majority of convicted and admitted molesters were sexually abused as children. One reason they did not receive the help they as children needed was the very conservative climate of their and their parents' generations. A sexually abused child did not speak out about the abuse, or if he or she did, the story was usually considered to be a fabrication. In the last 10 to 15 years we have begun to understand that child sexual abuse is quite widespread, and we have begun taking children seriously, rather than punishing them, when they report it.

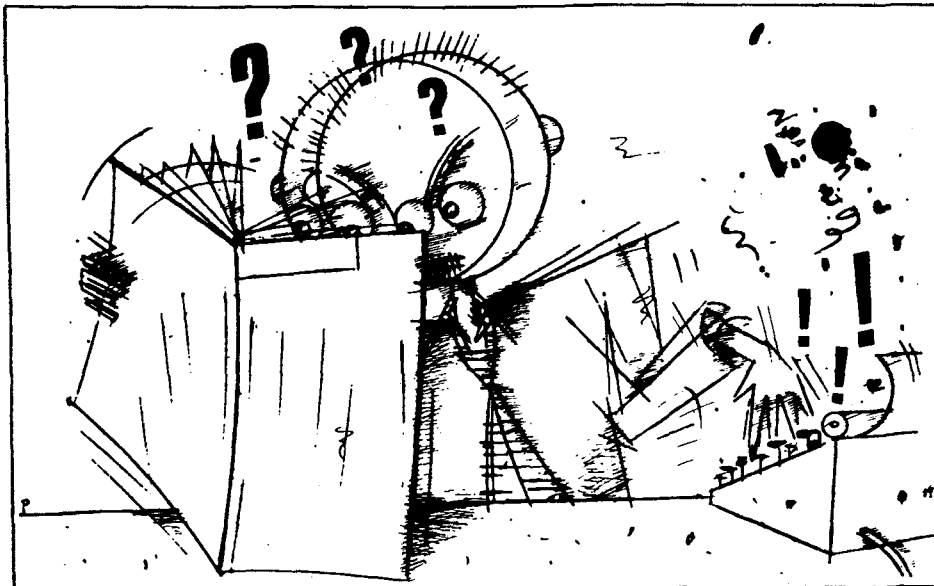
We still choose to punish rather than provide treatment for the offender, which makes it extremely difficult for offenders to come forth on their own. And we often confuse protection of the child with punishment of the offender (as Cockburn confuses protection of an adult suspect with punishment of the child reporter). If offenders are not willing to confess their problem in a culture that believes so strongly in punishment, then we are left with the only sources of testimony available: the child victims.

How we are to understand the child's disclosure (as fact, fantasy, or both) is a complex problem given the intense emotionality this topic engenders. It is a topic that embodies one's assumptions not only about sexuality and sexual abuse but childhood in general, one's own childhood, the relationship between the world of children and the world of adults and the power structures inherent in that relationship. Cockburn's reactionary article is merely part of the hysteria.

Mark Chuoke
Pomfret Center, Conn.

Culpable

AS AN EARLY-CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR, I SHARE Alex Cockburn's concerns of the tendency toward "witch hunts" in response to allegations of child abuse (*ITT*, Feb. 14). Immediately following the first reports of the McMartin case (and similar cases),



there was a definite decrease in the amount of affection shown by many preschool teachers toward their students—the result of concerns that displays of affection—such as good-morning hugs—might lead to allegations of impropriety. At the same time, many parents were also unduly scared by sensationalized stories in the media that exaggerated the incidence of sexual abuse in child care (as Cockburn correctly pointed out, the majority of sexual abuse occurs in the child's home by a family member).

Children are not likely to lie about this type of abuse. Something may indeed have happened at the McMartin preschool, but due to botched investigative practices the children's testimony was tainted through "leading" questions and other inappropriate actions. Yet supporting their children through this case, lengthy as it may have been, these parents are doing the best thing possible: telling their children that they believe them and that they are trying to seek justice for the wrong that may have been done them. The saddest part of sexual child abuse is often the psychological damage that happens when a child does come forth to tell his or her story and is not believed. Sexual child abuse remains an extremely difficult crime on which to obtain a criminal conviction, due in part to cynics such as Cockburn. I suggest he might spend some time listening to victims of this crime and hear the one refrain most common—"I tried to tell, but no one would listen" or "I didn't think anyone would believe me."

Cindy Jurie
Orlando, Fla.

Over his head

ALEX COCKBURN'S ARTICLE ON THE MCMARTIN acquittal (*ITT*, Feb. 14) is embarrassing-ly naive.

Cockburn simply disregards the possibility that children are sometimes sexually

and psychologically abused in the context of satanic worship. He would like to think that the spate of allegations these last years are simply evils perpetrated by Reaganism. By calling such events witch hunts and likening them to the church-led persecution of women (and some men) during the Middle Ages, he reduces children's accounts of ritualistic sexual abuse to echoes of history rather than the personal traumas they often are.

Even before Reagan came to power, many of us in rape crisis centers heard tortured stories of adults and children who described cuttings, beatings, burnings and mutilation of their bodies or of animals during satanic rituals. Many had vaginal or skin scars; all bore deep psychic wounds. The most seriously harmed that I have known coped with pain and violation by fragmenting themselves into multiple selves at some early age. Many of them had difficulty distinguishing between fact and fantasy. The horrors came back in recurring, uncontrollable patterns that made living a "normal" life or having trusting, loving, stable relationships impossible.

While their accounts are sometimes disjointed, bizarre and fused with fantasy, survivors of ritualistic abuse do their best to convey the horrors of what happened to them. They remember out of a child's limited capacity for explanation at the time of the trauma; as they grow older, they may embellish their stories with more sophisticated science fiction-like detail. This is not to excuse what may seem like lying but to locate its genesis. Apparently Cockburn has not been touched by such torment or known someone who has.

"Witch hunts" is the wrong label for the McMartin case, in spite of its eerie beginnings and the inept way in which social-service and prosecutorial staff handled the official proceedings. My own concern is that

this case has been so badly muddled by everyone involved that we may never know the real events or extent of harm suffered by the children involved.

Abuses do happen. In the days ahead, Paul Ingram, a former Thurston County sheriff's deputy in Olympia, Wash., will be sentenced for his admitted sexual abuse of two young females (now adults). His alleged co-conspirators were another sheriff's deputy (the detective who once handled sex crimes) and a state patrolman. The victims recount details of their long-term abuse, which sometimes occurred during satanic rites. Ingram has acknowledged belonging to a group that wore robes and sacrificed people in allegiance to the devil. He has revealed specific times, places and animal sacrifices, corroborating the women's stories.

Both women are severely disabled by their experiences, unable even to testify in court. As a consequence, charges against the additional two men have been dropped. All three accused men held socially legitimate, respected positions and were endowed with the public's trust. Ingram was, additionally, chair of the county Republican Party at the time of his arrest (in late 1988) and a leader in his church.

Children are powerless against this kind of consolidated authority in adults. Do they really lie so often about adults violating them? No, not very often. For every case of adults falsely accused by children, you find nine that never come to light.

I suggest we approach these signs of trouble with more intelligent, inquiring minds and an up-to-date sense of human politics. Labels, name-calling and sarcasm will not be useful tools in the enormity of the task.

Carolyn M. Byerly
Seattle, Wash.

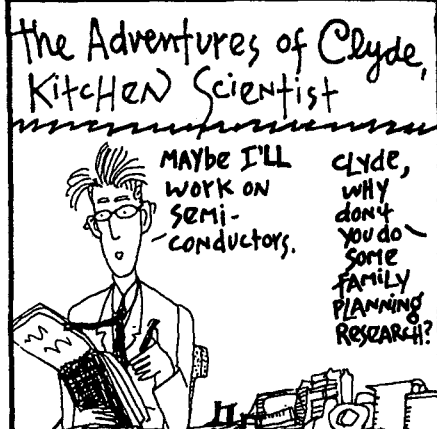
One cheer for McMurtry

EVERY SO OFTEN I READ SOMETHING THAT IS SO good that it makes me jump. John McMurtry's "No Room in the Market for McEducation Policy" (*ITT*, Jan. 24) was one such piece. I've read nothing of equal length that analyzes academia at such depth and with so much polemical flare. I've already made copies for my students and colleagues and would urge others to do the same. And let's hear more from McMurtry.

Bertell Ollman
Department of Politics
New York University

Editor's note: Please keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

SYLVIA



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by Nicole Hollander

By James Petras

THE VOTES WERE CAST IN NICARAGUA, but the election was decided in the boardrooms of banks and in strategy sessions in Washington, New York, London, Zurich and Bonn. The contra war and the economic embargo solidified and deepened the committed supporters of the revolution in their opposition to U.S. imperialism and its local clients, but the less committed blamed the revolutionaries for provoking the ire of the patron and for bringing violence and shortages into their lives.

Yet, while there is no doubt that the U.S. played a major role in the electoral outcome, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) strategy in dealing with the U.S., the domestic elites and the urban working class was also a decisive factor in shaping the political debacle. The way in which the regime put forward the concept of a "mixed economy" contained the seeds of its downfall.

Political strategy of defeat: To understand the flaw in the FSLN's strategy it is important to understand the nature of U.S. strategy. The Reagan administration adopted a long-term military-economic strategy that combined economic embargo to block development and social reforms with military action aimed at destroying productive units, increasing FSLN military expenditures and intimidating the population. These moves were keyed toward the political strategy of financing and organizing the media, political parties and propertied elites within Nicaragua in order to exploit the social conditions created by Washington's external pressures.

Washington pulled its supporters out of Nicaragua's 1984 elections because their strategy had not yet fully made itself felt. But five more years of intensified warfare and concessions from the FSLN created optimal conditions for electoral victory, and the FSLN committed the strategic mistake of agreeing to elections under these circumstances. In short, they organized elections on the terrain created by the counter-revolution. For the Sandinistas the elections were an attempt to end the war and begin development. But they should have ended the war and begun reconstruction and development before holding an election.

The second flawed component of FSLN political strategy was unilateral concessions to internal and external elites at the expense of their historical base.

Flawed strategies planted seeds of Sandinista defeat

The decision to endanger the revolutionary process by calling elections in the midst of war and economic disintegration was made in response to U.S., European and elite demands, not through an examination of the conditions of the working class and the rural and urban poor. Moreover, the political process preceding the elections was marked by unilateral concessions that strengthened the opposition and weakened the Sandinista national constituency. President Daniel Ortega's freeing of Somicista and contra terrorists created popular disaffection. Apart from the injustice felt by the victims, it must have demoralized Sandinista supporters who had been fighting the war to encounter their assassins on the streets handing out leaflets in the electoral campaign.

The pattern of opposing and then conceding opposition positions was repeated throughout the period leading up to the elections: the extensively documented U.S. organizational and financial intervention in Nicaraguan politics was first denounced and then accepted. No other regime—West, East, North or South—has allowed media and political groups supporting external armed intervention to receive funds and to function publicly. The decision to allow the U.S. to bankroll UNO's political campaign was merely the culmination of this policy.

These unilateral internal concessions were matched by a similar external process. In the so-called peace process, Nicaragua accepted minute scrutiny of its electoral process, while Guatemala and El Salvador's bloodletting was passed over and the contras were not demobilized. Once again, the populace was marginalized as concessions to overseas elites took primacy. After years of urging the Nicaraguan people to support the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador, Ortega signed a statement describing the Cristiani regime as "legitimate" and "democratic"—exactly what the U.S., UNO and the death squads had been saying—and only weeks after Cristiani had bombed densely populated working-class neighborhoods.

Such one-sided concessions to UNO, the U.S. and its regional clients reinforced the

ideology, image and authority of the opposition. Yet this policy was seen as clever politics by Sandinista cheerleaders in the U.S. and Europe who hoped to convince liberals or social-democratic legislators that the Sandinistas were not "orthodox Marxists."

The Sandinistas' strategy of reaching upward, outward and to the right eroded their class and popular support inside Nicaragua. Since Sandinista politics pandered to the elites as the "new realism," there was little to hold the less-committed Sandinista supporters: they could not be expected to follow the labyrinth and the 180-degree policy shifts—in the hope that they would find the golden chalice in an uncertain future—particularly since all the Sandinista byways were leading toward orthodox market-oriented austerity programs.

The last and somewhat bizarre effort of the Sandinistas to follow in the footsteps of their Western adversaries was the election campaign itself. The FSLN resort to image, politics, patronage, celebrities and personality in the context of a destitute electorate confronting an affluent, well-financed and externally connected elite was disastrous.

Falling between two chairs: Retaining elements of private-property ownership is sensible, particularly in underdeveloped societies with a substantial petty commodity sector. But in Nicaragua the general formula of a "mixed economy" left the strategic export sectors—the main instruments of accumulation—in the hands of the agricultural and commercial elites. The Sandinistas continued and even attempted to deepen the agro-export economy inherited from Somoza, focusing their reforms on the distribution side. In short, they attempted to harness the Somicista agribusiness structure to a welfare state. As a result, neither worked: the elites absorbed subsidies, exported hard-currency earnings, financed counterrevolution and failed to invest. The continuation of the pre-existing agro-export sector absorbed resources, cut back on small-scale programs and prevented alternative structures from emerging. The "mix" in the mixed economy created an incongruous and unstable situation between a popular revolutionary state and a counterrevolutionary ruling class still controlling the basic means of production. The ruling class could not control the state; the state could not develop the economy. One or the other would have to concede. Over the decade the Sandinistas oscillated between threats, pressure and concessions: the former policy in the first half of the decade, the latter in the second. The political damage exceeded the economic in this version of a mixed economy.

The Sandinistas also assumed that concessions to overseas banks and the U.S. would permit a continuation of pre-revolutionary relations. As a consequence, they continued paying off the inherited Somoza debt and new debts (until they ran out of funds and fell in arrears) despite the cutoff of new loans, particularly from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund

(IMF). Likewise, Sandinista expectations of the continuation of trade with the U.S. proved illusory. To the degree that the Sandinista policy was geared to ending the U.S. blockade, its policy fell between two chairs: it failed to gain U.S. support while strengthening its internal adversaries. While the FSLN gained tactical victories (in small loans and limited trade) maneuvering among its capitalist adversaries, the latter gained strategic allies within the Nicaraguan political economy.

Under the stress and pressures of the war, the FSLN beat a disorderly retreat from the mid-'80s onward, shifting from cooperatives and a regulated economy to the anarchic forces of the "free market." The freeing of market forces unleashed hyperinflation, black-marketing, speculation and disincentives to work for a wage. These policies undermined the working-class and working-poor base of the revolution and vastly expanded petty commodity speculation.

By the end of the '80s, the trend was from a mixed regulated economy toward a deregulated market culminating in an IMF-style stabilization plan. The Sandinistas introduced an austerity program that savaged wage and salaried workers and the rural and urban poor while increasing profits and prices for the elites in a fashion similar to those implemented by reactionary regimes in Latin America. The electoral rejection of Ortega by many former FSLN supporters must have been their revenge for this silent coup—a response that they will probably regret.

The unmaking of the revolution: The Nicaraguan revolution took place in a poor and underdeveloped country and sustained a decade-long destructive war with an intransigent imperialist power. The pressures of war and economic necessity forced difficult choices on the revolutionary leadership. Strategies designed to consolidate that revolution helped unmake it. The results were tragic not only for Nicaragua and Central America but for progressive forces everywhere.

Yet the struggle for state power in Nicaragua is far from over. The old ruling class has regained a portion of power, namely control over the political regime, but urban and rural working people are still the dominant force in civil society, as well as in the popular army, the judiciary and the police. Given Ortega's embrace of electoral politics and free-market economics, it should not be difficult to negotiate and perhaps reach some formula for power-sharing.

In the Third World, U.S. interventions have produced only detours to popular revolutions. But delayed transformations in which nationalist, democratic and social demands converge become more radical. U.S.-installed electoral regimes have been unable to resolve fundamental contradictions, whether it is Jose Napoleon Duarte in El Salvador or Corazon Aquino in the Philippines. On the contrary, such interventions have exacerbated deep-seated economic problems. Grenada, with almost one-third of the labor force now unemployed, is paradigmatic of the outcome of U.S. intervention. Nicaragua's electoral outcome is a setback in the larger historical process, but it is temporary and partial.

James Petras teaches sociology at State University of New York-Binghamton.

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The Pogo fallacy: Blaming the genes and not the system

Suddenly it becomes a lot clearer, doesn't it, that the Enemy isn't Us? Not unless we're to blame for trying to survive in the World As It Is. The enemy is The Bank, isn't it, the system of corporate imperialism whose blind uncontrollable will to profit will be served even if it means the death of the planet? And its apologists. Like Pogo. The media whores that make sure the last thaut we hold as we're marched away to the gas ovens is that WE'RE the Enemy, OUR hearts are the problem, in short that ITS ALL OUR FAULT.

Is there no fyt left in the victims of the Banks' war on the Earth? Not enuf to allow us even to...name the Enemy?... Can't do that, can we? Safer to blame ourselves.

—Tom Reveille, *Is Pogo Public Enemy #1?*

The trouble with Pogo-ism ("We have met the enemy and he is us.") is it allots the blame without any sense of proportion. Environmentalists are particularly guilty of Pogo-ism. Look at the January-February issue of *Greenpeace*, where 12 activists were asked: where do we go from here?

Bill (*Death of Nature*) McKibben answered that "we must invent nothing less than a new and humbler attitude toward the rest of creation. And we must do it quickly." Thanks, Bill. Petra Kelly, from the West German Green movement, suggested that "the problem is not the atom bomb but the hearts of people." Kirkpatrick Sale took the view that "the task for the 1990s then ... is nothing less than to begin the long process of changing our culture, our values." Wendell Berry stated that "the Earth is not being destroyed by the industrialists alone; it is being destroyed by every consumer: we must renew our families and our neighborhoods. We must remake the local economies of household and community."

Usually, when people go on in this sort of style, the next thing you hear is the word *Empowerment*. Now once upon a time there was a perfectly good word, *Power*. They had it, and we wanted it. In moments of revolutionary upsurge we seized it, or tried to. Victor Serge once wrote a novel called *The Birth of Our Power*.

Then, one sad day, we didn't want power anymore. We wanted *empowerment*. *The Birth of Our Empowerment*. It doesn't sound very good, does it? What does it mean? I still don't know. So far as I can see, the notion of *empowerment* is an offshoot of the self-realization movement and probably, if you go back far enough, primal-scream therapy. Every time you see the word *empowerment* substitute *power* and see how it holds up.

Ralph Nader, whom I greatly admire, is partly to blame. He uses the phrase *citizen empowerment* a lot. But at least Ralph means something serious. He's talking about power, and he knows who the enemy is. Not us but them, the corporations.

The trouble with Pogo-ism and with the idea of *empowerment* is that they imply we're playing on a level field. If we are all equally *The Enemy* and if we all equally *empower* ourselves, then suddenly the enemy will no longer be Us. In fact, there'll be no Enemy and Us will hold power.

This is all balls, of course. As Tom Reveille points out, most of the time the enemy isn't us. The damage is being inflicted by capitalists and their elected flunkies at the

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

federal, state and local level who are not just *empowered*—they hold power.

Capitalists and their political representatives love to spread the blame. In the mid-'60s Daniel Patrick Moynihan, now the senior U.S. senator from New York, declared himself so wonderfully to the powerful (notice the difference between the *empowered* and the truly *powerful*) by saying that black people had somehow brought it all on themselves.

Blacks weren't, Moynihan suggested, poorer, more unemployed, less healthy, worse educated, more ill-housed, less long-lived than white folk because they were the victims of a racist and exploitative class system. No. The fault lay in something called The Crisis of the Black Family. It was all their fault.

Powerful people loved to hear Moynihan say this. They called him *brave* and *unafraid to challenge conventional wisdom*. In other words, he was telling them exactly what they wanted to hear and he was *empowering* them to leave black people to stew in their own misery.

In the olden times, powerful people used to explain away visible injustice by saying that this was the way God wanted things to be. At my school we used to sing a hymn called "All Things Bright and Beautiful." One of the verses went like this:

*The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them high and lowly,
He ordered their estate.*

In other words, when God was handing out empowerment chits, most people drew short straws.

The modern version of God's disposing hand is genetic destiny: the fault, dear Caesar, lies not in our stars but in our genes. Racists—i.e., the people who run the system and who *empower* (that is, hire for pay) journalists to write what they want to read—love anything that suggests that the ugly features of our social system can be blamed on faulty genetic programming. Not nurture but nature: the people at the bottom of the heap are there because they were born that way.

On February 15, the *New England Journal of Medicine* published a paper by four doctors titled "Racial Differences in Susceptibility to Infection by Mycobacterium Tuberculosis." It got big play in the newspapers and on television. The *New England Journal* sends out advance copies to the major

media, so on February 15 the *Los Angeles Times* ran a big story about the TB paper headlined "Blacks High TB Rate May Be Linked to Genetics." The *New York Times* gave it top-of-the-page play too.

The *Los Angeles Times* spelled out the big news in its first paragraph: "The disproportionately high rate of tuberculosis among blacks, long blamed on social factors such as crowding and poverty, may result in part from greater innate susceptibility to tuberculosis infection, a surprising new study has found." In the eighth paragraph the message was rammed home some more: "It has long been recognized that blacks are disproportionately affected [by TB]. But health officials have tended to blame social factors—poverty, crowding, poor nutrition and limited access to medical care."

So there we have it. Roll up social programs and federal and state funds allocated to battling TB among minorities. It's in their genes. There's nothing we can do.

And indeed, the *Los Angeles Times* wasn't misrepresenting the *New England Journal's* paper. The four doctors—Stead, Senner, Reddick and Lofgren—reported that they had examined patients in 165 integrated Arkansas nursing homes and prisons who—black and white—had been living under the same conditions and had then been exposed at the same time to a TB outbreak. Subsequent infection rates among blacks had been twice as high as for whites, thus suggesting "heritable differences between individuals and groups with respect to the innate defense system that functions before infection develops as distinct from the immune system that develops afterward."

One of the great epidemiologists of our time is Dr. Sam Epstein, now at the school of medicine at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He's done tremendous pioneering work on the environmental causes of cancer, and he has long insisted that health and disease are located in an economic system that exposes the less *empowered* to far greater risks.

First of all, when he spoke to me, Epstein let loose with some general reflections, apropos Pogo-ism: "Neo-Shockleyism loves to shift the blame from maldistribution of resources to some genetic predisposition. Look at cancer rates in blacks. Five-year survival rates are, let's say, 38 percent for blacks and 50 percent for whites. Do you

say that's because of genetic susceptibility or because of limited access to health care for blacks? Blacks get the dirtiest and most dangerous jobs in industry, working, for example, on the top side of coke ovens, living in close proximity to mills, with maximum exposure to point-source discharge of atmospheric effluents, so they have high cancer rates.

"Now, as regards these TB infections, at an early stage cells called macrophages mop up invading bacteria, prior to the first immune response. And at that point there may be differences between macrophage response between blacks and whites. But to suggest that the behavior of the macrophages does not reflect a wide range of prior considerations—including stress, poverty, nutrition—is simplistic in the extreme, and to say they are genetically determined is nonsensical."

So, Epstein said, it was all very well for those four doctors to match their black and white populations at the time of the study, but there was in the study no consideration of a wide range of those prior variables: where had the black people in the nursing home grown up? At what had they worked? What had been their income levels, as compared to similar indices for the white patients?

When you think about all this for a minute, you see the absurdity of it. Here was a study that assumed that black people growing up in Arkansas in the '20s and '30s were, by the time they entered an old persons' nursing home, on an average par in terms of physical resilience to elderly white persons from the same state. Phooey to Pogo-ism. Power had already taken its toll.

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Other Losses: An Investigation into the Mass Deaths of German Prisoners at the Hands of the French and Americans After World War II

By James Bacque
Stoddart Publishing Co., Toronto
248 pp., \$26.95

By David Goodwin

IN THINKING ABOUT THE REINTERPRETATION of longstanding historical truths, the distinguished World War II historian Charles S. Maier has written: "Neither genuine questions nor good-faith answers should be placed off limits. If historical investigation undermines the founding 'myths' of one group or another, the scholar still believes that its mem-

HISTORY

bers should revise their self-awareness and learn to live with complexity. Kant's nutshell answer to what constituted the activity of the Enlightenment is still valid: *sapere aude*, dare to know." Pursuing this thought, Maier goes further: "Historical truths will be plural and they will be political; they are answers to questions posed differently by different individuals, ages and communities."

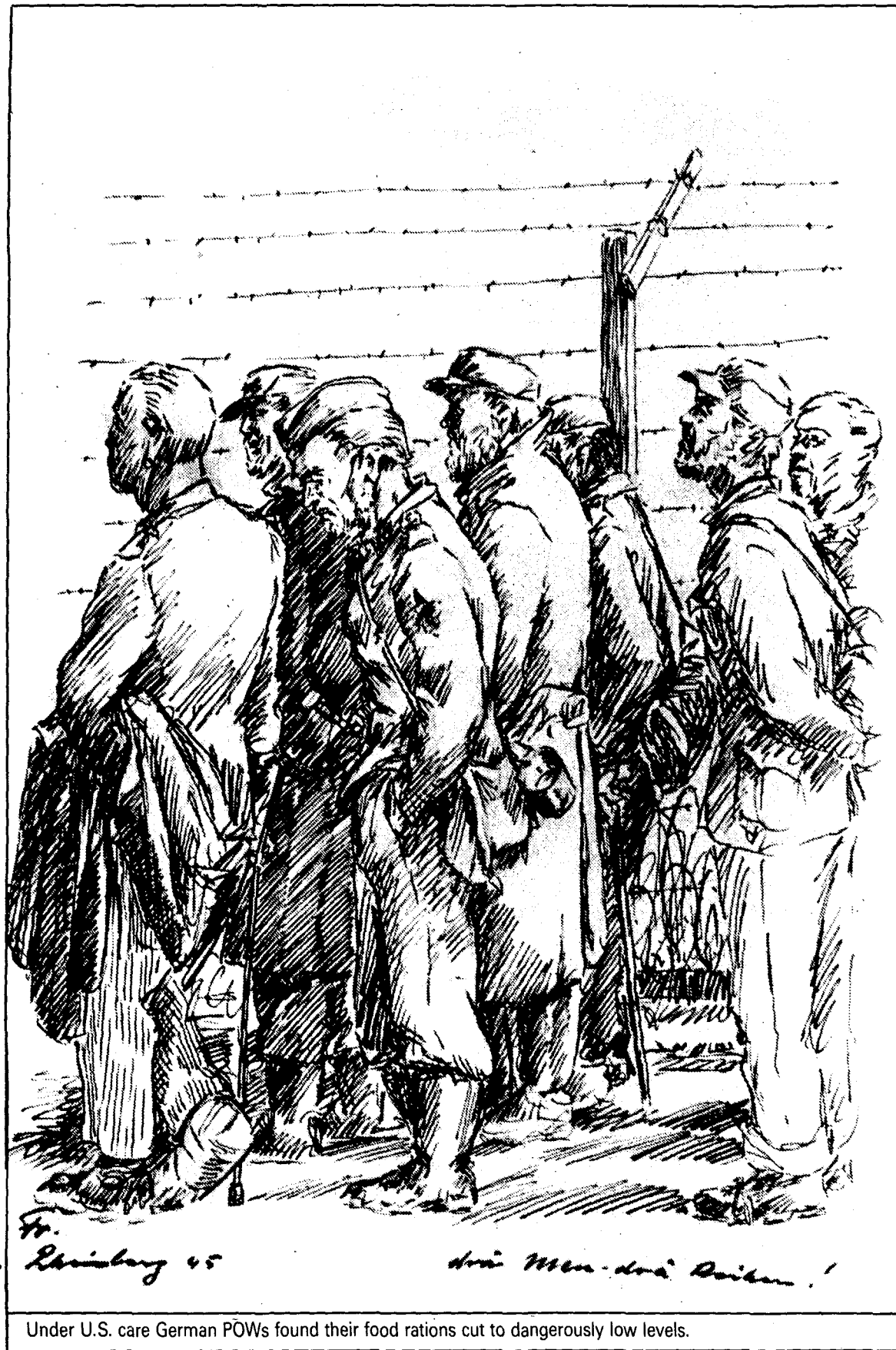
Forty-five years after the fact, the Canadian novelist James Bacque is taking a crack at the reinterpretation of American history. He has attempted to provide what I believe are good-faith answers to genuine questions about the American treatment of German prisoners of war (POWs) after they surrendered to American forces in the final days of World War II. Bacque's two central revelations in *Other Losses: An Investigation into the Mass Deaths of German Prisoners at the Hands of the French and Americans After World War II* are shocking:

- Between 800,000 and 1 million German prisoners of war died in American and French POW camps. Most died of starvation or from diseases related to the horrible conditions that existed within the camps.
- The entire policy of POW neglect was set by the supreme commander of the Allied forces, Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Recasting myths: The political consequences of Bacque's findings, should they prove to be correct, may shake some of the founding myths on which Americans have built their post-war image as the role model for decency, democracy and justice.

Bacque stumbled onto the German POW story while working on a book about Raoul Laporterie, a French Resistance hero who saved more than 1,500 French Jews from Nazi persecution. While looking through Laporterie's correspondence, Bacque found letters from a former German soldier whose life Laporterie had also saved in 1946,

Was there a ghastly ending to Allies' so-called good war?



Under U.S. care German POWs found their food rations cut to dangerously low levels.

An estimated 800,000 to 1 million German prisoners of war died in American and French POW camps. Most died of starvation and diseases linked to unsanitary conditions.

not from a mortal bullet wound, as it turned out, but from starvation in a French prisoner of war camp in Buglose in the south of France. To pursue this as a possible chapter in his book, Bacque interviewed other former German POWs who told of

horrifying conditions not only in French camps but in American camps as well. And they described deaths in very high numbers.

As he talked to these men, Bacque became convinced that what the former German POWs told him was

true. But what he lacked, however, was documented proof, the proverbial smoking gun. Eventually he found it in Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEP) prisoner-count ledgers stored in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Over and over in these documents Bacque found a somewhat mysterious column called "Other Losses." To find out what "Other Losses" referred to, Bacque interviewed Col. Philip S. Lauben, German affairs branch commander of SHAEP, who confirmed Bacque's suspicion: rather than referring to transfers or escapes, this column referred to

deaths of German POWs.

Bacque lays out his statistical data and other findings in nine extremely dense appendices. Bacque's German POW thesis depends on the statistical projection of death rates, taking what is known about German POW deaths in one camp over a short period of time and applying that rate to other types of data at other camps, data which Bacque admits is woefully incomplete and intentionally misleading.

Many have been critical of this statistical technique. But the very basis of statistics is to ascertain definable trends based on variables. In essence, this is what Bacque tries to do in the body of his book: to prove that these horrible conditions were consistent enough throughout the camps to result in the death of nearly 1 million men.

Jumping to the attack: The 12 chapters that lay out the argument are gut-wrenching, enraging and, even for the most cynical of those with a dissenting view of American history, truly hard to believe. It's obvious that Bacque wanted to write as scholarly and meticulously documented a book as possible to head off criticism that this is not "history" but the work of a novelist.

The effort is generally a success, but I wish Bacque had opened *Other Losses* novelistically to set the scene in Europe at war's end. He needed to establish a wider context for his discoveries, to concede points about the insanity of war, about the logistical nightmare that existed when the government of Germany finally collapsed and about the welling hatred felt by all as the reality of the Final Solution set in.

Instead, Bacque jumps to the attack, wanting to show that the hatred toward Germany among the Allied leadership was greater than is normally set down in the history books. Bacque begins his story by retelling a Quebec City Conference anecdote about Josef Stalin proposing that 50,000 German officers be lined up and shot at the end of the war and then toasting the idea with other Allied leadership. Only Winston Churchill objected to the barbarity of the toast.

Eisenhower goes overboard: This is combined with a discussion of the never-implemented Morgenthau Plan, which called for the dismantling of Germany's industrial sector in the Ruhr region in order to convert "Germany into a country primarily agricultural and pastoral in character." Bacque also quotes from an Eisenhower letter to his wife: "The German is a beast" and, in another context, "It's a pity we couldn't have killed more." Bacque writes that Eisenhower's feelings "against the Germans grew stronger the more desperately they fought, the more he saw of the horrors of the concentration camps, until he felt ashamed that he bore a German name."

As Bacque has said in an interview, this hatred is understandable, but it is not justifiable. Who would not have felt ashamed to bear a German name when faced with the knowledge of the Nazi Holocaust? But did the Holocaust merit punishment by starvation? Bacque states that for American people it did not; but for Eisenhower, Bacque implies, it was justice served.

Until Aug. 4, 1945, most German POWs were adequately fed. But on that date, the combined chiefs of staff of the Allied forces implemented a change of status for German soldiers, from prisoners of war to disarmed enemy forces (DEF). The change affected only American-held troops. The SHAEF order stated that "Germans are responsible for feeding and maintaining disarmed German troops" and that the American army would "provide no shelter or other comforts." Lastly, the new policy stipulated that "there should be no public declaration regarding the status of German armed forces or of disarmed troops."

The sole purpose of this status change was to cut rations for many of the nearly 5.25 million POWs held in American camps to dangerously low calorie levels, a blatant violation of the rules of the Geneva Convention.

In what is the strongest and most gruesome part of the book, Bacque goes on to thoroughly document the suffering of these men in the nearly 1,800 camps throughout France and Germany. To prove that food was not only reduced but that the U.S. Army actually prevented others—including German civilians and the International Committee of the Red

Cross—from feeding the men, Bacque cites dozens of personal accounts of German prisoners, the medical reports of American and French doctors at the camps, Red Cross reports and U.S. Army officer eyewitness accounts of the camps. One French officer, referred to only as Capt. Julien, who had seen the Nazi concentration camps, described what he saw in an Allied camp: "This is just like Buchenwald and Dachau," he wrote in a report, "peopled with living skeletons."

Eisenhower was extremely sensitive to American prestige as beneficent victor. He and his staff kept a close watch on how events in Europe played in the U.S. and European press. Rumors about the camps eventually made their way into two French newspapers, *Le Figaro* and *Le Monde*. Articles by Jacques Fauvet in the Sept. 30 and Oct. 1, 1945, issues of *Le Monde* were particularly hard-hitting: "As one speaks today of Dachau, in 10 years people throughout the world will speak about camps like Saint Paul d'Eglaux," where, by Bacque's calculations, the death rate was 21 percent per year. American diplomatic pressure to head off these public reports was so severe that Charles de Gaulle was forced to accept much of the responsibility for the poor condition of the German POWs (though in reality they had been turned over to the French in very poor condition), and he blandly promised to do better.

Drive-by journalism: The American press did worse. The *New York Times* correspondent on the scene was the late Drew Middleton. Middleton's pieces on POW camp condi-

tions toed the American line, using only rose-colored U.S. Army reports as sources. And when he did acknowledge problems, he blamed them on the French. It is perhaps only the irony of coincidence that when the *Times* ran Middleton's obituary this past January 12, the war-time photo it chose to run was a picture taken of him shortly after the German surrender as a 32-year-old, pipe in hand, smiling up at the supreme commander himself. When Bacque interviewed Middleton about his POW camp coverage in the summer of 1988, Middleton "admitted that he had not actually visited the camps themselves but [had] only 'driven by.'"

What Bacque has tapped into has become a familiar pattern in the last two decades of recent American history. A policy is established by a series of "winks and nods" (the title of Bacque's final chapter) and is kept secret from the American people. When the first repercussions of the policy leak out in the press, they are quickly suppressed and replaced by more favorable accounts.

The process is perpetuated by historians who sanitize the dirty parts of an official version of the truth to be passed on to younger generations.

E.L. Doctorow, in an essay called "False Document," has called this process "regime history," which is the tendency in the U.S. to print and teach history that stresses the dominant ideology, that we are "one nation, under God," in effect excluding, marginalizing or rendering irrelevant everything that doesn't conform to that vision.

Here, for example, is an excerpt

from a high school textbook entitled *Nazi Prisoners of War in America*, written by Arnold Kramer (Stein and Day, 1979) on the change of German POW status to DEF. "Unlike its allies,

Bacque thoroughly documents the suffering of German POWs in French and American camps.

the United States proclaimed the men 'Disarmed Enemy Personnel' directly after the war, which on the one hand stripped them of any right under the Geneva Accords, while on the other, enabled them to receive a higher level of treatment than could be offered to the same men as prisoners."

There's no mention that the status change was kept secret, or that America's allies refused to go along with the change on moral, ethical and legal grounds. And while this is probably not the first time that improved treatment of prisoners has been used as a justification for the elimination of human rights, its inclusion in an American textbook leaves little wonder why the reinterpretation of American history is a lonely business.

The "official" story: And then there are the more serious historians, the ones who write state history. Stephen Ambrose, a professor of history at the University of New Orleans and Eisenhower's official biographer, has played an interesting role in the effort to legitimate

Bacque's book. At first Ambrose voiced support for *Other Losses*. On the *CBS Evening News* (Oct. 10, 1989), Ambrose said: "I think Jim Bacque has cut and made a major historical find here. It has—it is—to me, as an American historian, I'm ashamed."

But of late Ambrose has been back-pedaling. In the Feb. 2, 1990, *New York Post*, Ambrose claimed that Bacque "has misread the reports," and that "research in the National Archives indicates that the number who actually died was more like 200,000, perhaps even less." Ambrose is careful not to say who did his research in the National Archives, where Bacque spent hundreds of hours. In a phone conversation, Ambrose admitted to me that he hasn't done the research necessary to accurately say how many died. "It would be a huge job and I'm not interested; I have other projects," he said. "I really don't know how many died. I had to put something. It's probably more like 50,000."

Fifty thousand, 200,000, 1 million or "a higher level of treatment"—until more people in the U.S. read *Other Losses* and those qualified take an interest in replicating, augmenting or invalidating Bacque's research, the answers to the genuine questions he has raised will remain disputed. And if left unpublished in the U.S. (to date it has been published only in Canada and West Germany), *Other Losses* will continue to be ignored. If so, yet another chapter in American history will remain shadowy and dark, rendering Kant's "dare to know" simply another empty maxim. ■

David Goodwin is a writer living in New York City.

What I Saw at the Revolution: A Political Life in the Reagan Era

By Peggy Noonan
Random House, 353 pp., \$19.95

By Rod Benson

STOCKMAN, DEEVER, REGAN, EVEN Nancy—they've all written their memoirs now. Don't be ashamed: have you actually read them?

That's OK. True to their genre, these books are little more than ghostwritten pulp intended to cash in on their authors' fame, exercise a little spin control on history and trash their enemies.

But I made an exception to my Reagan-era book boycott for Peggy Noonan's *What I Saw at the Revolution*, and here's why you should too.

For one thing, Noonan, speechwriter for both Reagan and Bush, wrote her own book. That's not a common occurrence these days, and we ought to reward any intellectual effort in today's anti-intellectual political environment.

High Noonan: And for the connoisseur of Reaganite foibles, Noonan dishes out plenty of insider gossip with an honesty that is refreshing (her accounts read at times

Fake my day: a pose is a pose is a pose

like a modern *Ms. Smith Goes to Washington*.)

Toward Reagan she adopts a worshipful tone, and it's a love that accepts him warts and all. In a priceless sequence reminiscent of Woody

POLITICS

Allen and Diane Keaton in *Annie Hall*, she muses on what Reagan's top aides ("the fellahs") really thought about him:

"They said with a certain edge, 'The president isn't a detail man' (The fool doesn't know Antarctica's the one on the bottom!); they'd say,

Who better to explain the Great Communicator's secrets than the person who wrote the script?

'The president is a big-picture man' (He wouldn't know a fact if it ran up his nose!)."

But the best reason to buy this book is that it pays to know one's enemy. And what better source is there to explain the secrets of the Great Communicator than the person who wrote the script.

Noonan comes right out and says it: "Speechwriting was where the administration got invented every day ... the center of gravity in that administration, the point where ideas and principles still counted."

But what are those ideas?

According to her, the Reagan revolution was about lower taxes, less government and anti-communism. And, in principle, let's grant that it was.

The reality, however, was more like lower taxes for the rich, higher taxes for the rest of us; less government to actually help people, more government intrusion into citizens' personal lives; anti-communism if

Continued on following page



Peggy Noonan: scriptwriter for the great scene stealer.

Continued from preceding page

it's convenient, pro-communism if it's China.

She sees the idealism of the young "movement" conservatives but fails to see how their contempt for government led to its criminal misuses by HUD, the EPA and other agencies.

Crimes of the art: Noonan says she's shocked when Republican pollster Dick Wirthlin gives the speechwriters advice on what applause lines touch a nerve with the voters, as if her only purpose is to faithfully advance the Republican gospel.

Yet what was her famous "kinder, gentler" phrase for Bush if not a cynical (albeit artful) rhetorical twist designed to take the hard edges off his campaign's conservative demagoguery?

I thought maybe Noonan would, if not convert me to Republicanism, at least explain what the voters see in Reagan that so many of us progressives don't.

And she does tell us—but not the way she intends.

For Noonan, Reagan represents a permanent realignment of the political landscape—not the kind that

FDR accomplished virtually overnight but a slow, gradual change that will become even more apparent in the 1990s.

She gives her own story as proof.

Born and raised in an Irish Catholic working-class family, after high school in Long Island she worked briefly as an insurance clerk then went to a nearby public college.

Her moment of political truth came at an anti-Vietnam War rally, where she is disgusted by the "contempt for America" she hears in statements like "we're a racist, genocidal nation with an imperialistic lust for land that isn't ours."

The little guy and the big lie: One senses that it is not so much what these students are saying but who they are and what they represent in Noonan's eyes that repels her: pampered rich kids, spaced-out parents trying to be hip, a "contemptuous elite."

Noonan comes to the quick conclusion that Republicans must be the good guys, the ones on the side of the people.

Working as a radio writer for Dan Rather years later, her views are confirmed when she contrasts CBS' hard-working blue collars who voted for Reagan with the older white collars, men with prep-school names like "Bud and Shad and Chub and Chad ... intelligent Protestants who lived in Connecticut and had been educated out of the narrowness of their backgrounds into a more acceptable liberalism."

Rather, whom she admires, is different, of course (when she asks what Rather was like in Vietnam, one of the "Bud Shads" sniffs, "He wore bright yellow socks").

The strange thing is that once Noonan lands in the White House her critical eye for class distinctions disappears. When one stuffy young Republican grills her about where she went to school and then wonders why she's not embarrassed of her alma mater—or when she's introduced as the person who "took the woman speechwriter's job," Noonan sees no connection to the party or the crowd she's embraced.

Obviously there are snobs and bigots enough to go around on both sides. What ought to count, but what Noonan doesn't ponder, is which party's policies really do help the little guy.

She credits the Democratic Party with the minor accomplishment of noticing poverty but dismisses their attempts to alleviate it as tragically misguided.

If the truth be known, Noonan has a real hangup about rich liberals. If you're rich you'd better not care about the poor, because that's charity and that's condescending. It's a matter of pride for her; she made it, by golly, and she doesn't need their help: "When you meet the rich in politics, tell them that when it comes to economic justice, growth is all, and growth doesn't come from noblesse oblige, thank you very much."

But it never occurs to her that many progressives do want growth,

just not her kind of trickle-down growth that helps the rich, not the poor, thank you very much.

Bleeding-heart con jobs: To show us that Republicans really do care, she points to "bleeding-heart conservatives" like chief speechwriter Ben Elliott. When presidential staffers and their families fill up a White House anti-drug event with Michael Jackson, Elliott notices the crowds of black children massed outside the gates: "They're the ones who should be here," he said. "They're the ones who deserve it."

To which Noonan concludes, "A small thing, but Republicans, then, rarely thought like that, or spoke like that."

And they do now?

It remains to be seen whether Reagan really accomplished a realignment. But with the help of wordsmiths like Noonan, he did reformulate.

It's time Democrats discovered that there is poetry in the souls of Democrats if we can find a poet to express it.

late the way successful politicians communicate with their public.

Noonan is most interesting (and most instructive) when she regales us with her battles against the humorless policy bureaucrats waiting around every corner to clip the wings off her soaring prose. This is no idle complaint, and I suspect that Michael Dukakis' speechwriters must have lost this battle inside their camp.

The conflict is perfectly summed up by one State Department official who would "refer to himself and his colleagues as 'we substantive types' and to the speechwriters as 'you wordsmiths.' He was saying, We do policy and you dance around with the words."

"We would smile back," writes Noonan. "Our smiles said, The dancer is the dance."

The function of speeches has changed because the real dancers, the politicians, have become free agents, representing no one but themselves and their self-made celebrity. The oft-heard line, "I vote for the man (or the woman), not the party" expresses the public's acceptance of this new arrangement.

Speeches, once intended as means of advancing policies or programs, are now, at their most effective, a form of autobiography. What moved us when Jesse Jackson spoke at the convention was not his slogans but his tales of his own impoverished upbringing: "I understand. I've known abandonment." Or in the case of Mario Cuomo, it was his stories of his Italian father, a man "who once literally bled from the bottoms of his feet."

As communications professor

Kathleen Hall Jamieson writes in *Eloquence in an Electronic Age*, Reagan was successful because he revealed not only himself but the American people; he moved beyond autobiography to biography.

His penchant for relating the moving achievements of ordinary Americans such as Lenny Skutnik, the man who dove into the icy Potomac to save the survivors of an air crash, jibed nicely with his ideological belief that the American people are capable of great things if government would just leave them alone.

Democrats complain that Reagan's use of moving anecdotes served only to hide the truth of his government's policies.

But what is the political truth? The truth is what Americans saw in Reagan, the man and the mythologizer of the American dream, not what they (didn't) read in the op/ed pages the next day.

Let's get visual: It goes without saying that the best speeches, like Noonan's Challenger eulogy and the Normandy invasion's 40th anniversary, invoke or are supplemented by powerful visual images. In the television age, as Jamieson notes, speeches are most effective as captions to pictures. Bush's stated aversion to rhetoric doesn't mean he'll abandon the pictures, only that he'll shorten the captions.

Democrats get lucky once in a while, as Dukakis did in his carefully staged convention speech. For a brief moment he connected with the voters. But when he hit the campaign trail in the fall, it's as if he forgot everything he had learned.

More likely, he never understood.

And so in the debates, while Bush, who had studied Reagan well, communicated who he was (or at least how he wanted to be perceived) to the voters, Dukakis was so mired in his facts and figures that he couldn't react to a personal question about the rape and murder of his wife with a personal answer.

The Republicans' charge against Democrats may in fact be true: we have become the party of government, justifying and defending its efficacy instead of speaking as human beings to our fellow human-being citizenry. We make the mistake of associating the personal with the trivial so we can't see that politics isn't about programs—it's about passion and poetry and the search for our national identity.

Selling the notion of community, of national self-sacrifice or responsibility is a harder sell than the case for individualism and self-gratification, but there is a case to be made. There is poetry in the souls of Democrats if we can find a poet to express it.

That's not to say the cure for our ills is simply a different messenger. It's just understanding, as smart Republicans like Peggy Noonan do, that the message is only meaningful when we make it interesting enough so people listen.

Rod Benson is a former Democratic political speechwriter.

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Fighting over Orwell remains: many stake claim to his literary legacy



The Politics of Literary Reputation

The Politics of Literary Reputation: The Making and Claiming of "St. George" Orwell

By John Rodden
Oxford University Press
478 pp., \$27.50

By William E. Cain

JOHAN RODDEN'S BOOK PROVIDES an excellent account of the complexities of George Orwell's reputation. It is filled with fascinating details about various responses to Orwell: liberal and conservative, Communist and anti-Stalinist, secular and religious. It illuminates Orwell's powerful presence for such notable intellectuals as Irving Howe, Lionel Trilling and Raymond Williams.

Sometimes the immense detail Rodden supplies feels excessive, and a leaner, more focused book might have shown more effectively the basic pattern of response to Orwell—and brought home more clearly Rodden's larger points about the making of literary reputations. But this important book demonstrates well the symbolic role that Orwell

played in political and cultural debates, and at its best it uses Orwell as an occasion for first-rate analysis of the movements of intellectual history since the '30s.

Rebel and the common man: Rodden concentrates on Orwell's reception in England and America, though he does devote some attention to the Soviet Union and Europe (especially West Germany). He begins with an overview of Orwell's legacy that summarizes "10 stages" of Orwell's reputation and then turns to a lengthy, fairly abstract inquiry into the general "problem of reputation." The book's center explores the "portraits" of Orwell that commentators on the man and his books have sketched: the Rebel, the Common Man, the Prophet and the Saint.

Except among staunch Communists dismayed by his critique of Stalinism, Orwell has enjoyed an extraordinarily favorable reputation and has been the beneficiary of almost idolatrous praise. Trilling resonantly called him "the man who tells the truth," Howe named him "my intellectual hero," and Alfred Kazin described him as "a hero whom I shall always love."

But as Rodden nicely shows, critics and intellectuals have sometimes fallen out of love with Orwell. Here perhaps the most intriguing example is Williams, who admired Orwell in the mid-'50s but who bitterly stated in *Politics and Letters* (1979), "I cannot read him now." In addition, Orwell's champions have sometimes occupied radically opposite political positions. Writers as different as Norman Podhoretz and Christopher Hitchens have laid claim to Orwell and have argued about "what Orwell would say if he were alive" and had witnessed the Vietnam War, the invasion of Grenada and other national and international conflicts and crises. Orwell is an extremely mobile figure and, as the apparent embodiment of truth, honesty and integrity, he has been eagerly adopted by anarchists, leftists, reactionaries and religious visionaries.

Socialism and self-promotion: Orwell's own writing and conduct helped foster the heightened yet highly ambitious renown that he came to achieve. He declared himself a steadfast supporter of democratic socialism and even insisted that readers who interpreted *Nine-*

teen Eighty-Four as anti-socialist were terribly in error. The book, he said, was "not intended as an attack on socialism or on the British Labour Party, of which I am a supporter." And Orwell didn't shy from self-promotion. He arranged with *Reader's Digest* to run a 25-page condensation of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and contracted with *Life* magazine to publish an illustrated summary in its July 4, 1949, issue.

Orwell's life and work, Rodden concludes, have indeed been misinterpreted and distorted, but it is also the case that both the life and the work allow for diverse interpretations. To liberals, says Rodden, Orwell has stood as "an exemplary role model," the enemy of imperialism in *Burmese Days* (1934), the friend of the common man and woman in *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933) and the foe of cant and obscurity in *Politics and the English Language* (1946). To conservatives, on the other hand, he has been the exemplary, clear-sighted observer

LITERATURE

who warned of the dangers of socialism and the monstrous evils of the Soviet Union in his political novels and journalism of the '40s.

The main achievement of *The Politics of Literary Reputation* lies in Rodden's intensive scrutiny of Orwell's multiple images and the shifting, contested kinds of interest that countless intellectuals and critics have taken in the author and his writings. But Rodden also deals insightfully with many additional topics along the way, including feminist critiques of Orwell, film and TV versions of the novels, biographical studies, his place in the literary canon and in the classroom and the institutional networks (e.g., the Book-of-the-Month Club) that contributed to Orwell's fame.

Rodden judges that Orwell's reputation peaked in the early '80s, as the fateful year 1984 approached. According to a Harris poll published in September 1983, one in every four Americans claimed to have read *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. And by the first months of the following year, the novel was selling an amazing 50,000 copies per day. It was spotlighted on TV shows, in special issues of magazines and even in advertising promotions that boosted products such as the Olivetti personal computer as upbeat counterstatements to Orwell's ominous forecast of a world imperiously ruled by technology.

Totalitarianism totaled: But what will happen to Orwell's reputation as the year 1984 fades into the past and as the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union cast off totalitarianism? The people of these nations are proving decisively, I think, that Orwell's account of the totalitarian nightmare was limited at best, and maybe even absolutely wrong. Both *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* depict societies tied forever to control by brutal tyrants;

in both of them, revolution has quickly gone sour and the once-hopeful masses find themselves the pathetic victims of unconquerable, thuggish domination.

Especially in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell dwells upon the fiendish ingenuity with which the state holds sway, with its unending control of information and surveillance of the populace. But in this book, and in *Animal Farm* as well, Orwell also emphasizes the complicity of the masses in their own demise. When the stolid, hardworking Boxer is carted off to his death in *Animal Farm*, Orwell writes that "the stupid brutes" who "drew the van" were "too ignorant to realize what was happening," and this is a note that Orwell often sounded, particularly in the latter stages of his career. People invite the tyranny that torments them through their basic, blunt stupidity.

These views indicate that Orwell is less a skillful theorist of totalitarianism than a dispirited Swiftian critic of human nature and its absurd tendencies. True, he does allude at moments to the Proles in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a possible source of hope, but these are merely weak gestures. It's the lonely, overwhelmed hero Winston Smith who desperately invokes the Proles as humanity's last chance—an idea that Big Brother's agent O'Brien scorns and that Orwell himself seems unable to take seriously.

As one ponders Orwell's skepticism about people—they do much to cause their suffering and are helpless to topple their oppressors—one is immediately drawn to the rise of mass resistance and the sudden, striking downfall of totalitarianism in Eastern Europe. And one is perhaps led in the process to compare Orwell to the Caribbean intellectual C.L.R. James, who, like Orwell, attacked Stalinism. Yet James, unlike Orwell, always expressed great faith in the creative capacity of the masses. His precise, affirmative work predicted exactly what is occurring today.

James' interests in literature, politics and popular culture often intersected with Orwell's, and he was writing brilliantly in all of these areas as well as in political theory and philosophy while Orwell rose to intellectual prominence and public acclaim in the '30s and '40s. But James was greatly undervalued then, and he remains little known. Paul Buhle's superb recent biography, *C.L.R. James: The Artist as Revolutionary*, may at last begin to correct this huge oversight, but much work on this important figure remains. The exaltation of Orwell and what he represented meant that alternative voices were muted or not heard at all. In effect, the making of one man's huge reputation meant, among other things, that the range of cultural and political debate was narrowed. ■

William E. Cain is author of *F.O. Matthiessen and the Politics of Criticism*.

C A L E N D A R

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$25.00 for one insertion, \$35.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of ITT Calendar.

NEW YORK March 22-25

THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL
NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLES—Christopher Lyons; Thursday, March 22; 8 p.m., \$5.
VITO MARCANTONIO AND HIS NEIGHBORHOOD—dinner discussion with Jerry Meyers; Friday, March 23; 7 p.m., \$15
TOPICAL TAP—lecture/performance by Jane Goldberg; Saturday, March 24; 8 p.m.; and Sunday, March 25; 2 p.m.; \$6.

BEQUESTS

In These Times appreciates the bequests received from readers and supporters. These legacies (ranging from \$500 upward) have been a help to the paper's solvency and show a commitment for continuing *In These Times'* role of providing a left perspective on the news of today.

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TRANSFORMATION—art opening, curated by Wade Miller; Sunday, March 25; 6-9 p.m.

All events take place at the New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St., New York, NY 10011, (212) 941-0332.

April 6-8

THE 8TH ANNUAL SOCIALIST SCHOLARS CONFERENCE, *Democratic Upheavals and the End of the Cold War*, at Boro of Manhattan Community College, CUNY, 199 Chambers St. (near Trade Center). The conference features many guest speakers and participants from left publications, political organizations and alternative groups. For information and registration contact: R.L. Norman, Jr., CUNY Democratic Socialists Club, Room 800, 33 West 42nd St., New York, NY 10036.

CHICAGO March 25

For 40 years the journal *MONTHLY REVIEW*, founded by Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy, has represented independent and non-dogmatic socialist thinking. Readers and reporters of *MONTHLY REVIEW* in Chicago have formed a new discussion group, which meets at the New World Resource Center Bookstore, 1476 Irving Park Road. The group looks at a variety of topics covered in the journal that are timely for socialists today. This month's meeting, held Sunday, March 24, at 2 p.m., features the topic "Socialist Democracy and European Integration" by J. Hughes, Democratic Socialists of America, Chicago Chapter, with response by Asst. Professor William Pelz, DePaul University History Department. Co-sponsored by the Open University for the Left and the New World Resource Center. For more information contact Perry Cartwright, 2620 Jackson Drive, Woodridge, IL 60517, (708) 971-2620.

DENVER

March 23-24

THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH LEGACIES OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION. Physicians for Social Responsibility's National Meeting will examine the radioactive and toxic threats to our health and environment caused by years of nuclear weapons production. Speakers include Bernard Lown, M.D.; Alice Stewart, M.D.; and Charles Clement, M.D. Norman Cousins is the recipient of the 1990 PSR award. For more information contact PSR, 1000 16th St. NW, #810, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 785-3777.

WASHINGTON, DC March 24

Commemorate the assassination of Archbishop Romero and March to End the U.S. War in Central America. Assemble at 11 a.m. and march from the U.S. Capitol to the White House. A rally will be staged at the White House, followed by non-violent civil disobedience. Marches will also take place in San Francisco, Los Angeles and Austin, Texas. Co-sponsored by CISPE, SANE/Freeze, Nicaraguan Network, Pledge of Resistance, U.S. Student Association, United Church of Christ, Pax Christi USA, National Rainbow Coalition and many others. For more information, call (202) 265-0890, 328-4040 or 223-2328.

PHILADELPHIA/BOSTON

April 2-3

"Eyewitness Account: The Democratic Revolution in Eastern Europe," with Daniel Singer, European correspondent for *The Nation*.

Monday, April 2—Philadelphia: 12:30 p.m. at Temple University, 12th & Berks Mall, Gladfelter Hall, 9th Floor; 8 p.m. at University of Pennsylvania, 34th & Spruce, Houston Hall, Bodek Lounge, Main Floor. For information, (215) 843-2313.

Tuesday, April 3—Boston: 1 p.m. at Center for International Studies/MIT, 292 Main St., Cambridge, 7th Floor; 4 p.m. at Brandeis University, Alumni Lounge, USDAN Student Center; 8 p.m. meeting to be announced. For information, (617) 426-9026. All meetings are free and open to the public. Sponsored by the Democratic Socialists of America, 15 Dutch St., New York, NY 10038.

APOPKA, FL

April 6-8

THIRD FLORIDA GREEN CONFERENCE at Camp Thunderbird in Apopka. The conference features keynote speaker Dee Barry, former coordinator of National Clearing House of the Green Committees of Correspondence and will focus on organizers' skills training. For more information, contact: AFSC (American Friends Service Committee), 130 19th Ave. SE, St. Petersburg, FL 33705, (813) 822-5522

BERKELEY, CA April 7-8

THE BIOENERGETIC, ORGONOMIC BASIS OF LIFE AND WEATHER, introductory weekend workshops exploring the discoveries of Dr. Wilhelm Reich. Reich's contributions to the behavioral, biological and atmospheric sciences will be presented. Dr. James DeMeo will also cover his own research on the geography of human behavior and the global problems of atmospheric stagnation and desertification. Workshops will include a series of lectures, demonstrations and round-table discussions. From 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Unitarian Fellowship Center (corner of Cedar & Bonita streets). Fee: \$190, or \$95 for full-time students. Pre-registration is advised. Weekend workshops are also planned for October 20-21. For more information contact: Dr. James DeMeo, Director, Orgone Biophysical Research Laboratory, P.O. Box 1395, El Cerrito, CA 94530, (415) 526-5978.

INDIANA, PA

April 19

Second Annual Provost's Mini-Symposium, THE DAWNING OF A NEW ERA? Speakers are Norman Hodges, Dennis Brutus, Georgina Ashworth, Maria Patricia Fernandez-Kelly and Kevin Reilly. Contact: Irwin Marcus, History Department, IUP, Indiana, PA 15705, (415) 357-2237 or 2284.

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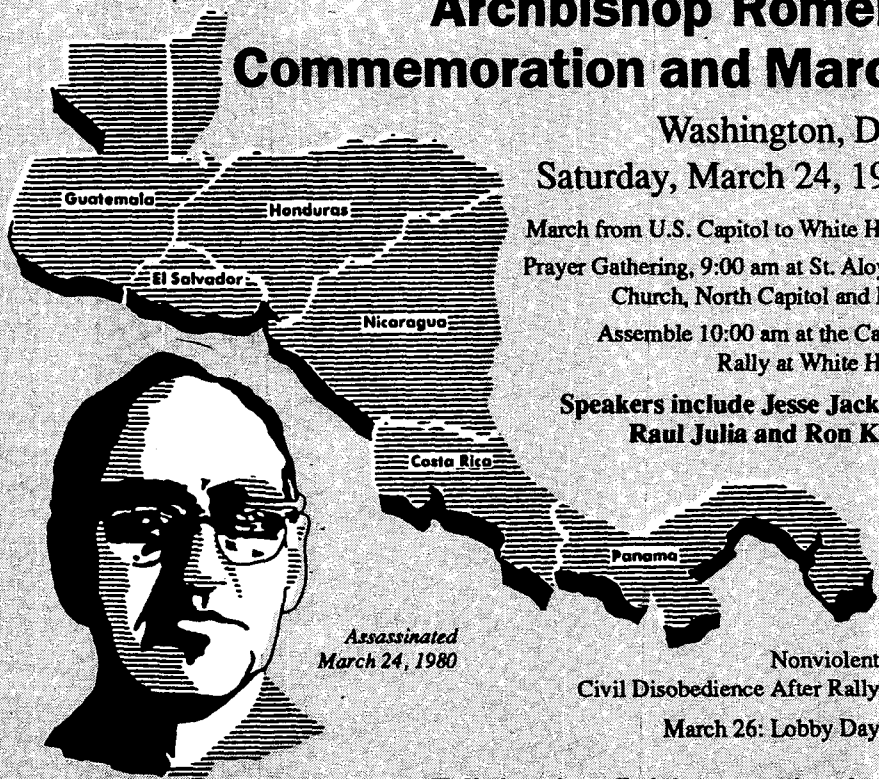
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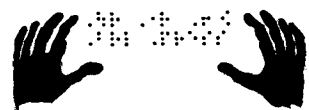
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JEWISH CURRENTS, March 1990 issue. "Dole's Meaty Message," editorial; "Marc Blitzstein Portrayed," Herbert Haufrecht; "Poorim? Peerim? Purim? Curses!" Max Rosenfeld. Single issue: \$2 plus 75¢ postage. Yearly: \$20 (USA). **JEWISH CURRENTS**, Dept. T, Suite 601, 22 E. 17 St., New York, NY 10003.

The National Mobilization for Survival Education Fund has just published a booklet on the "crisis" at U.S. nuclear weapons production facilities. *Banning the Bombmakers: Challenging Nuclear Weapons Production* describes the environmental problems at each facility, the reason why the crisis is being publicized now, and the opportunity for disarmament that the DOE "crisis" presents.

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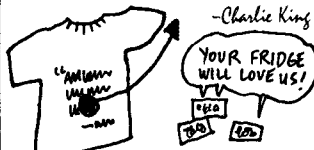
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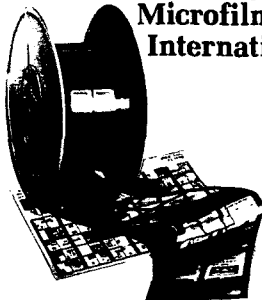
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Sub par

Tom Clancy's high-tech warriors surface in the wake of the Cold War.

The Hunt for Red October

Directed by John McTiernan
Paramount

By William Gibson

A week before the submarine epic *The Hunt for Red October* set sail across 1,225 theaters nationwide, NBC network news carried a long puff piece on the U.S. Navy's cooperation in making the film. It seems that Paramount was charged only \$500,000 for using nuclear submarines, aircraft carriers and technical advisers. The Navy has hopes that the film will be another *Top Gun* (1986) and will help generate enlistments, appropriations and general public support for the service.

A bit closer to the March 2 release, the Soviet Union announced that in 1975 there really had been a mutiny and an unsuccessful attempt to defect by the crew of a Soviet frigate. And, low and behold, to illustrate this new story the networks had even more clips from the film supplied by quick-thinking Paramount publicists. Just as the ubiquitous red-and-black advertising billboards and posters had earlier prophesied, "The Hunt is On. 3-2-90," *The Hunt for Red October* quickly became a media event and a huge success. It grossed \$17.1 million during its first weekend, high on the Hollywood record list.

Easy to fathom: The movie version of Tom Clancy's famous 1985 novel (more than 6 million copies sold) is simply plotted. The Soviet Union's premier submarine commander and "schoolmaster" for the submarine officer corps, Marko Ramius (played by Sean Connery), attempts to defect to the U.S. with the *Red October*, the USSR's most advanced submarine. The *Red October* is equipped with a new kind of super-quiet propulsion system that makes it virtually impossible to track. The ship is designed to silently approach the American coast and launch all its missiles.

To stop this first-strike weapon from being used, Ramius and his fellow officers decide to defect. Ramius also notifies the Soviet navy of his plans as a way of burning his bridges and motivating his fellow officers to continue the defection. The whole Soviet fleet consequently joins the hunt. American intelligence notices both that the *Red October* looks a bit different from previous *Typhoon*-



The Hunt for Red October: a big-budget voyage to see what's on the bottom.

class subs and that the Soviet fleet is hunting it down. The Joint Chiefs of Staff are afraid that Ramius is a madman who wants to start World War III.

Fortunately, Jack Ryan (played by Alec Baldwin), a professor of naval history and CIA analyst, once met Ramius and has read his file; he knows that Ramius is just one very unhappy man who is trying to defect. National Security Adviser Jeffrey Pelt (played by Richard Jordan) gives Ryan only three days to find the *Red October* and orchestrate a defection before the U.S. Navy will shoot to kill.

After many harrowing adventures, Ryan and his buddies on the U.S. attack submarine *Dallas* find the Russian sub and sail her to Jack's hometown in Maine. The film ends with moonlight glistening off Connery's majestic silver-grey beard and hair as he says, "The sea will grant each man new hope." To which Baldwin replies, "Welcome to the New World."

Another read scare: So stated, it's hard to understand all the excitement about *The Hunt for Red October*. To break the code surrounding this movie requires seeing it as a bowdlerized symbol of Tom Clancy's "techno-thriller" novels and the political and cultural values they idealize. When the novel first appeared in 1985 Ronald Reagan called *The Hunt for Red October* "the perfect yarn" and invited Clancy and his family to dinner at the White House. Secretary of the Navy John Lehman caught the fever and rhetorically asked, "Who declassified this thing?" Within weeks the novel was being read throughout Washington.

During the 1988 presidential campaign Dan Quayle cited Clancy's second book, *Red Storm Rising* (1986), in advocating that the U.S. develop an anti-satellite missile fired from jet fighters. In the fall of 1989 Vice President Quayle recommended Clancy as a consultant to the National Space Council. More recently,

Republicans in Maryland have begun efforts to recruit Clancy to run for Congress against incumbent Democrat Roy Dyson.

Crudely put, Clancy's success lies in creating warrior heroes for upper-middle-class men. Whereas Rambo is a working-class stiff who fights with his massive body-builder physique and hand-held weapons, Clancy's characters are educated professionals; they fight with their minds and the most advanced technology science can develop.

Secondly, the techno-thriller novels by Clancy and his followers all show how the U.S. military and intelligence "system" has recovered from defeat in Vietnam and can now outthink and outfight any potential enemy. They make expensive high-technology weapons systems enchanting and desirable.

Just as importantly, they show how military managers can expertly coordinate their forces. U.S. businessmen may be failing in the global economy, but senior military commanders have mastered the world's most complex division of labor to combine men with machines in the exquisite choreography of battle.

Moreover, the system isn't a corrupt, impersonal bureaucracy that routinely betrays the ordinary fighting man (as in the Rambo films) but is instead a fraternal

Making the military look infallible in movies like *The Hunt for Red October* can be expensive—it even cost a life. During the making of the film last June, the attack sub *U.S.S. Houston* accidentally hooked a tugboat's towline, sinking the boat and drowning its captain. Two days later, the same sub (seen in the film as the *U.S.S. Dallas*) almost sank a fishing vessel by snagging the boat's net and nearly pulling the craft under. Only an alert crew member slicing the net free saved the ship.

—W.G.

nity in which most men relate to each other as father to son and brother to brother. Military units are portrayed as "tribes" headed by wise patriarchs. The movie version of *The Hunt for Red October* only hints at these friendships, but the novels are filled with long loving scenes of men treating each other like close family members. This brotherhood of war allows men to transcend their class and race backgrounds, as well as their rank in the military stratification system.

A man's man's man's world: Lastly, the techno-thriller affirms the primacy of men. Men are responsible for defending the boundaries of society against the enemy. Only when adult men successfully defend the boundaries of society can women give birth and raise children inside society. *The Hunt for Red October* opens with Jack Ryan saying goodbye to his wife and little girl as he heads off to join the hunt in the frozen waters of the North Atlantic.

These social dynamics constitute the core of the techno-thriller genre. The novels and their movie heirs are not completely dependent on the Soviets and the Cold War for their appeal. Clancy's latest bestseller, *Clear and Present Danger* (1989), has both Colombian drug lords and bad American intelligence officials as enemies. This shift in enemies did not change his vision of war as an ideal way of life that bonds heroic men together through their relationships with sophisticated weapons systems. Thus, although the long nightmare of the Cold War may well be over, the cultural values celebrating war and the warrior as the creators of a special utopian society will continue to help make war a seductively attractive political policy.

William Gibson is the author of *The Perfect War: Technowar in Vietnam*. He is writing a book on warrior fantasies and mythology in the '80s.